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SOCIETY  
OF  
FRENCH AQUARELLISTS

TEXT BY THE BEST FRENCH CRITICS

ILLUSTRATED WITH PLATES IN PHOTOGRAVURE

PRINTED IN TINT

AND WITH DESIGNS IN FAC-SIMILE

AMERICAN EDITION, EDITED BY EDWARD STRAHAN



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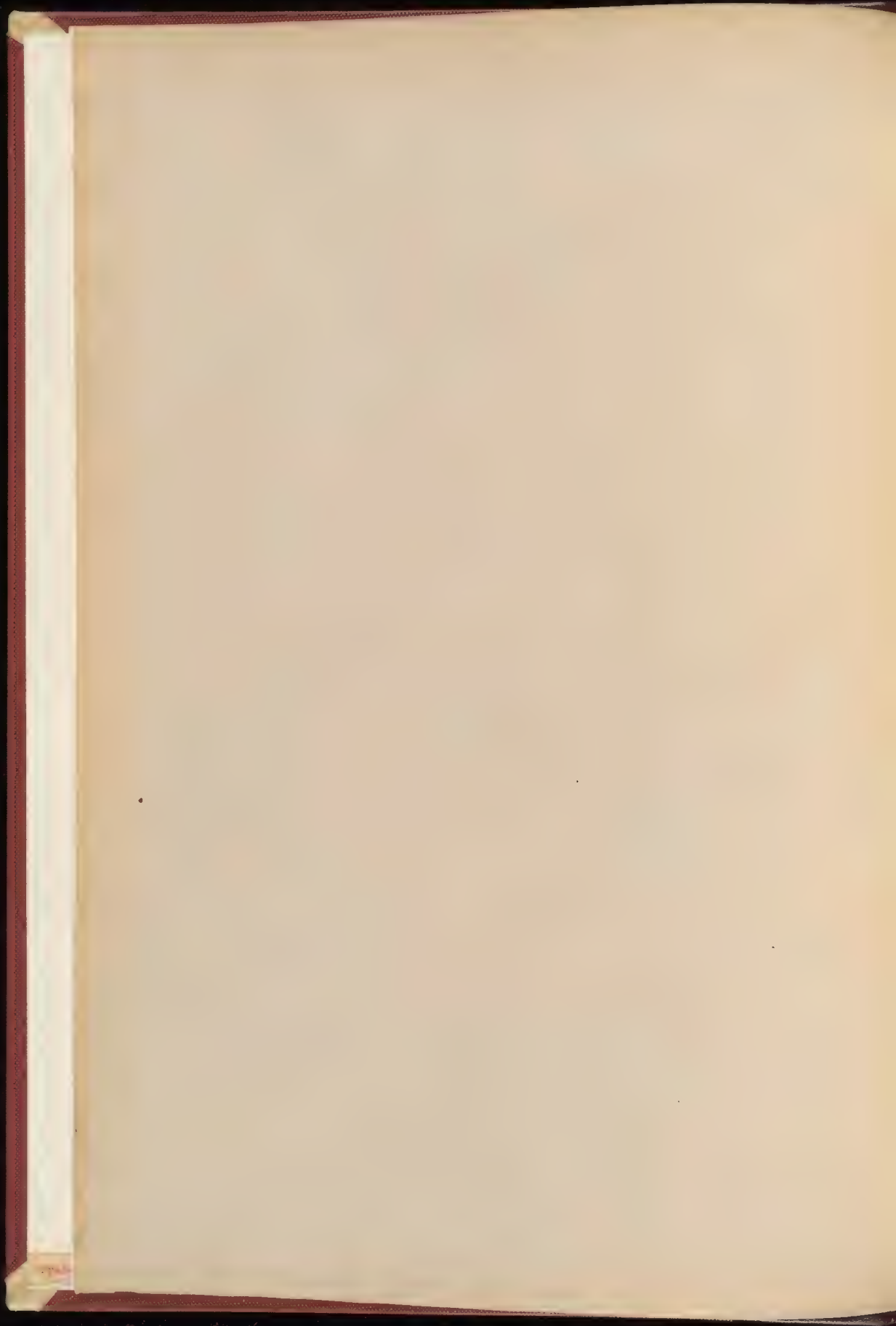
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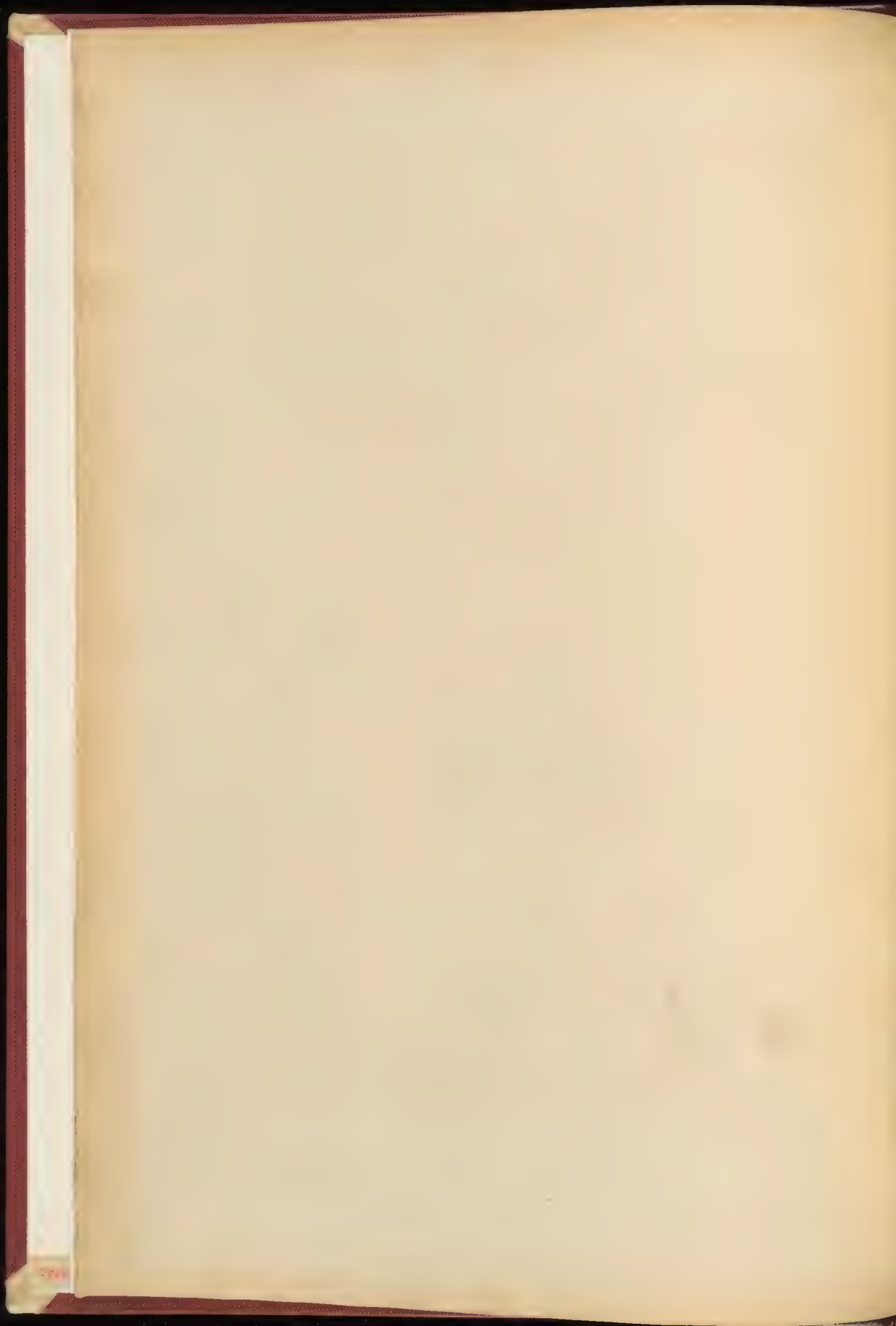


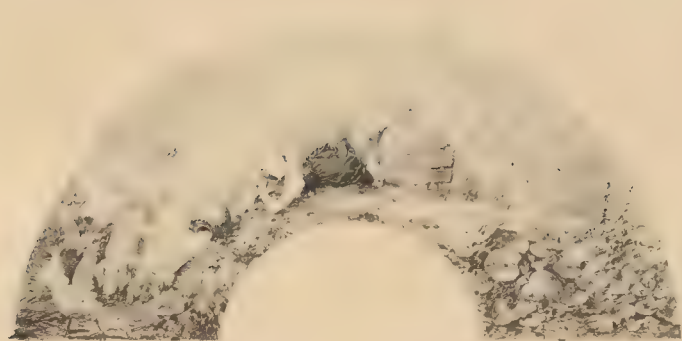




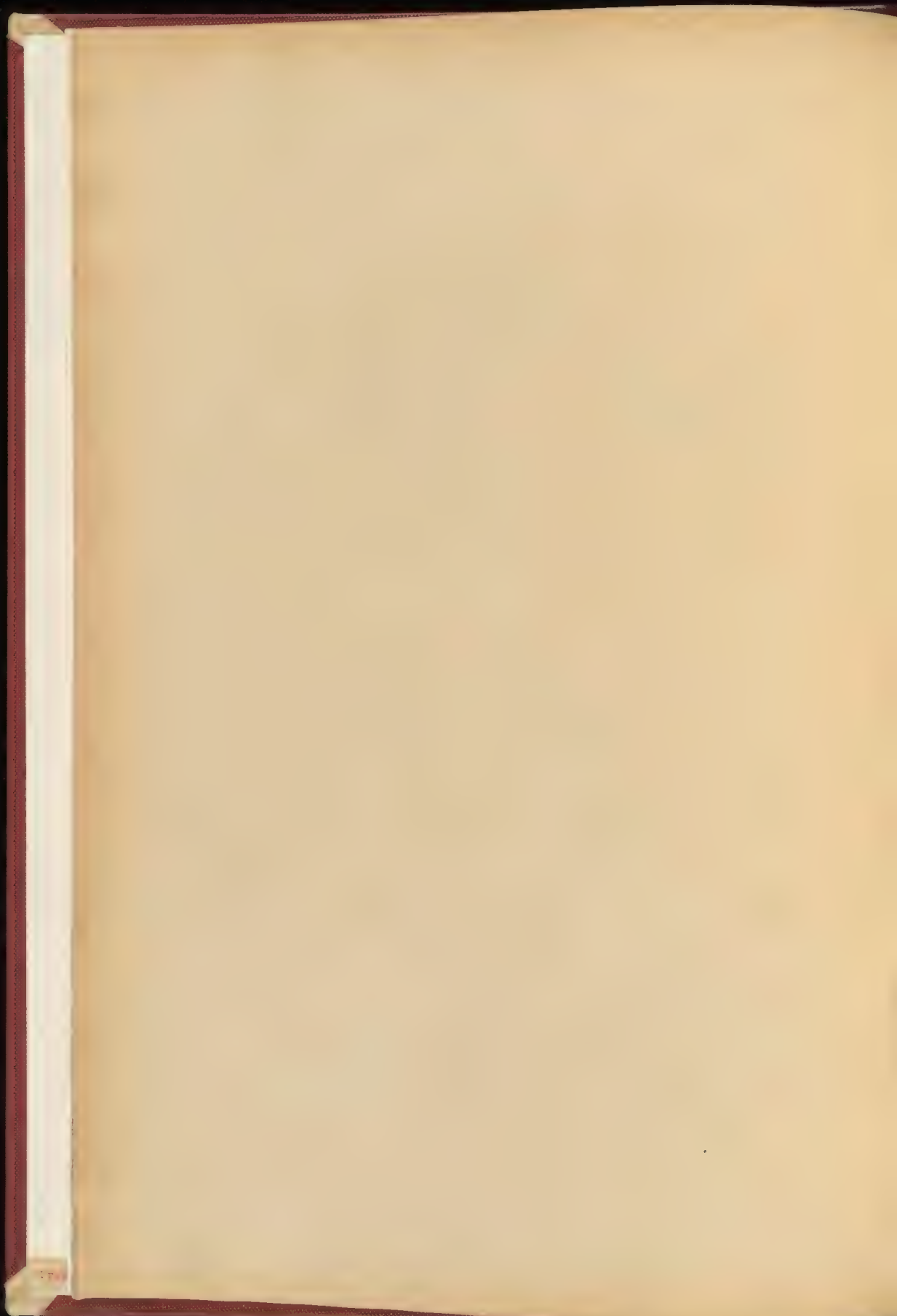


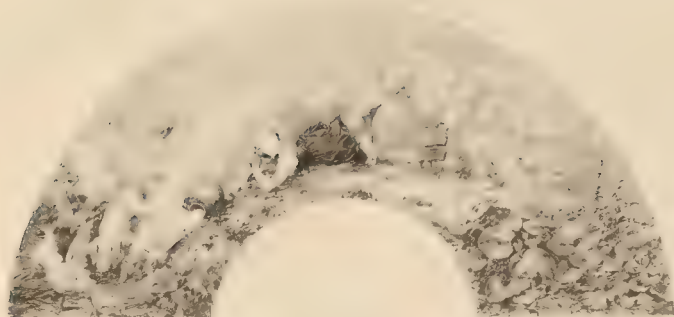












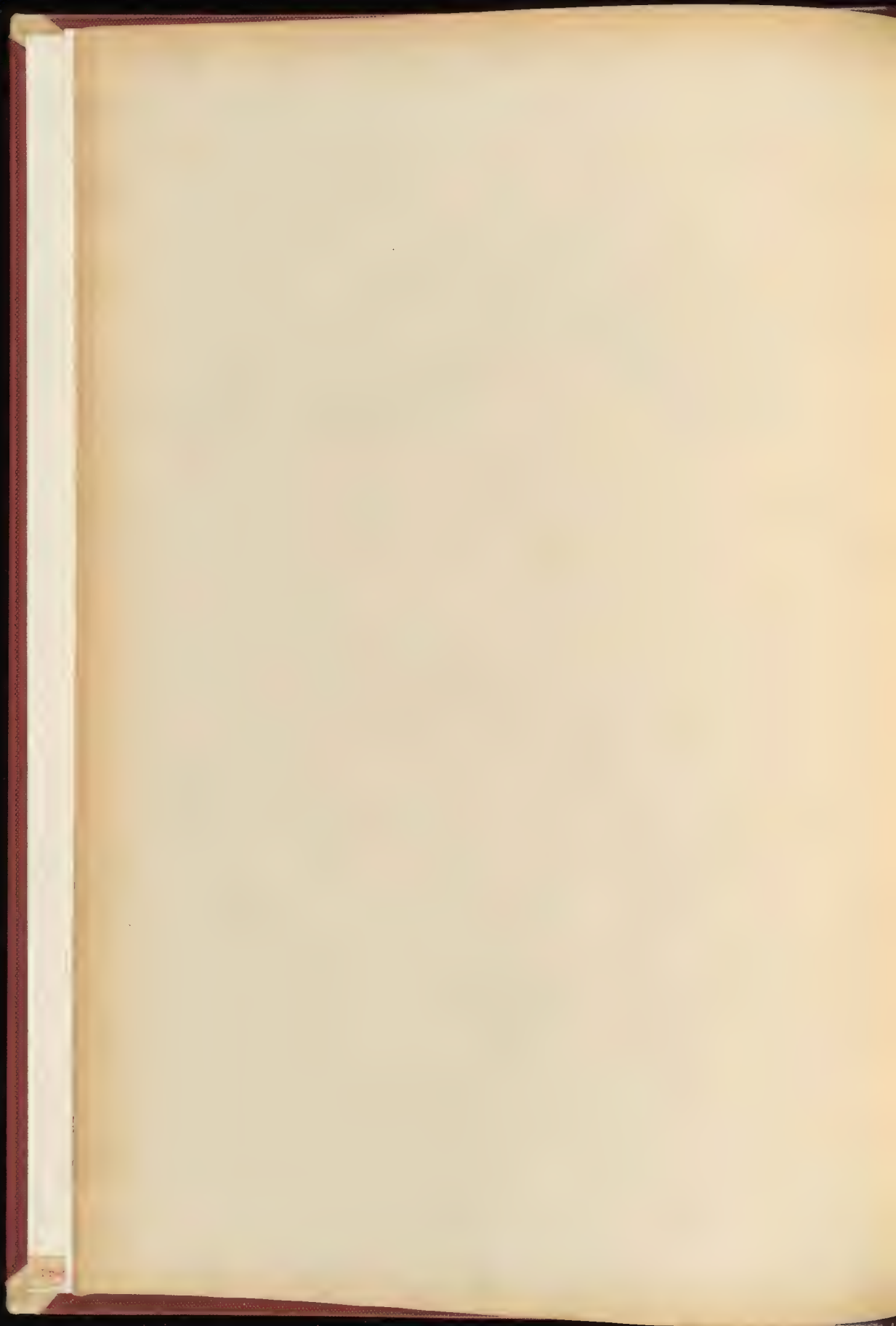
SOCIETY

OF

## FRENCH AQUARELLISTS

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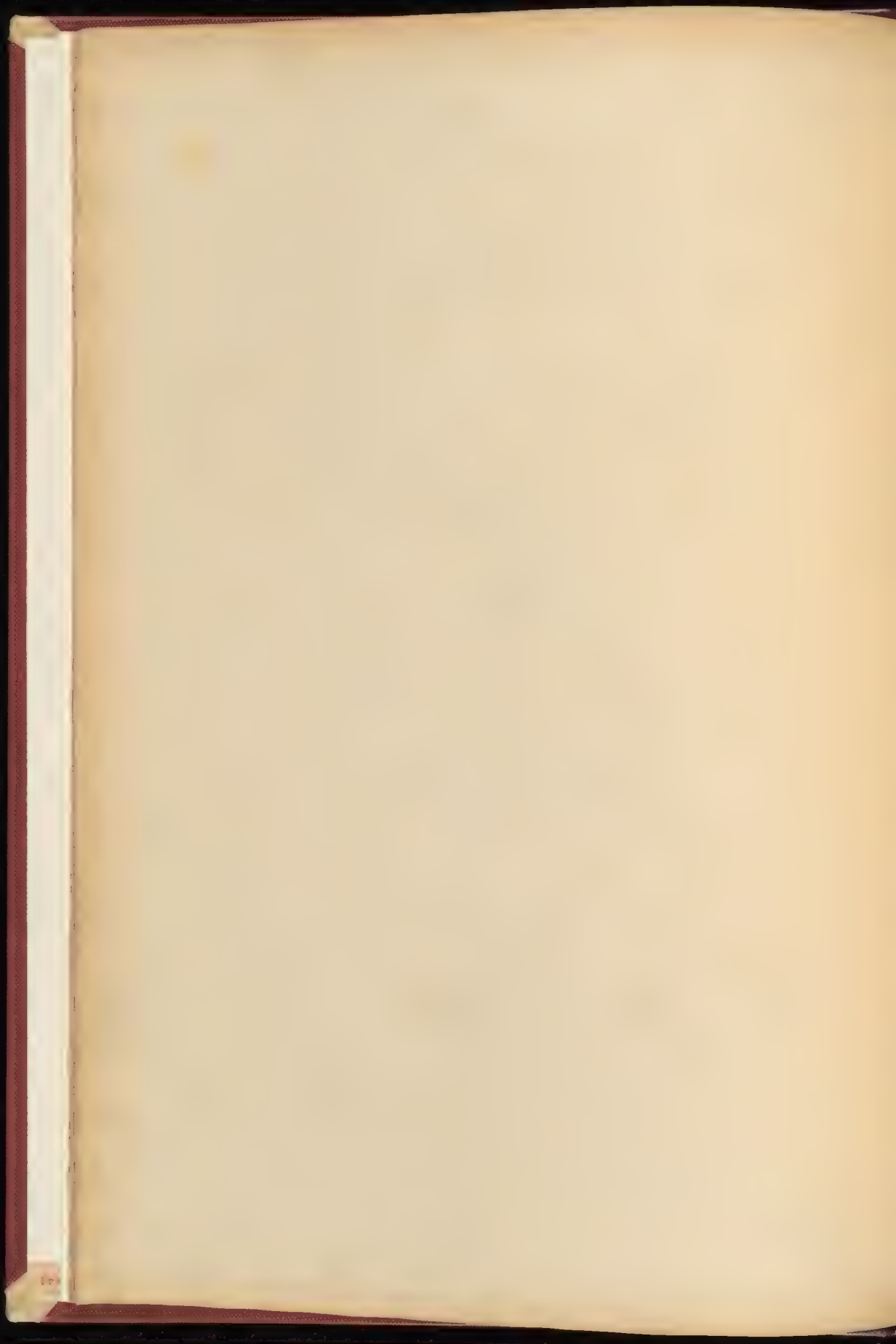
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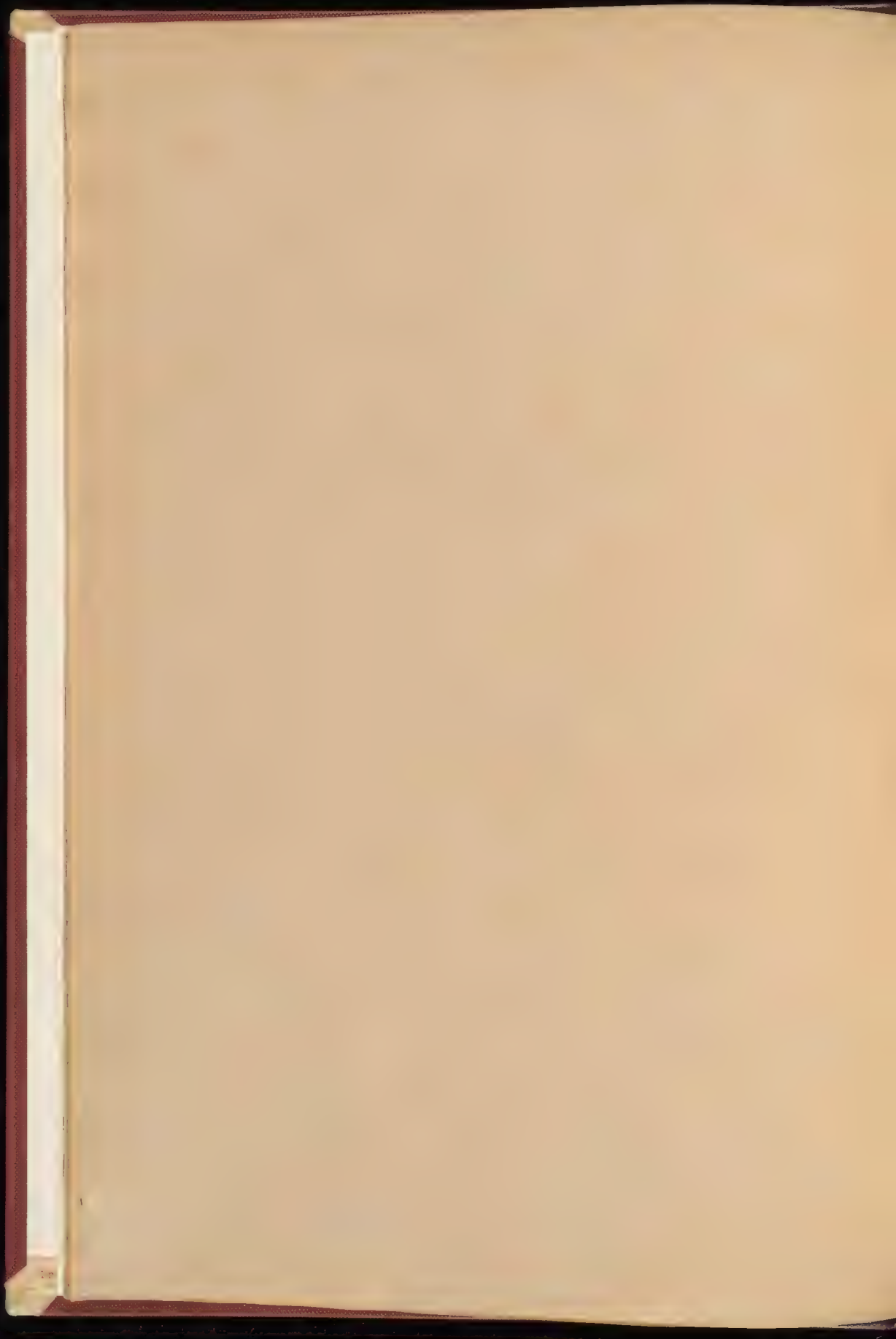
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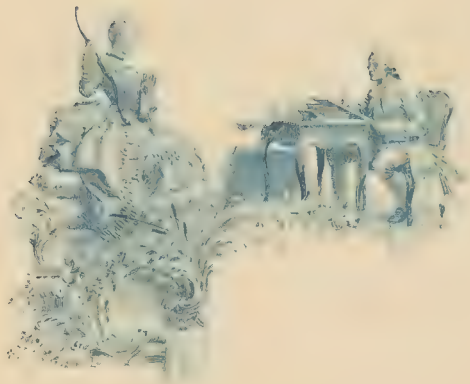


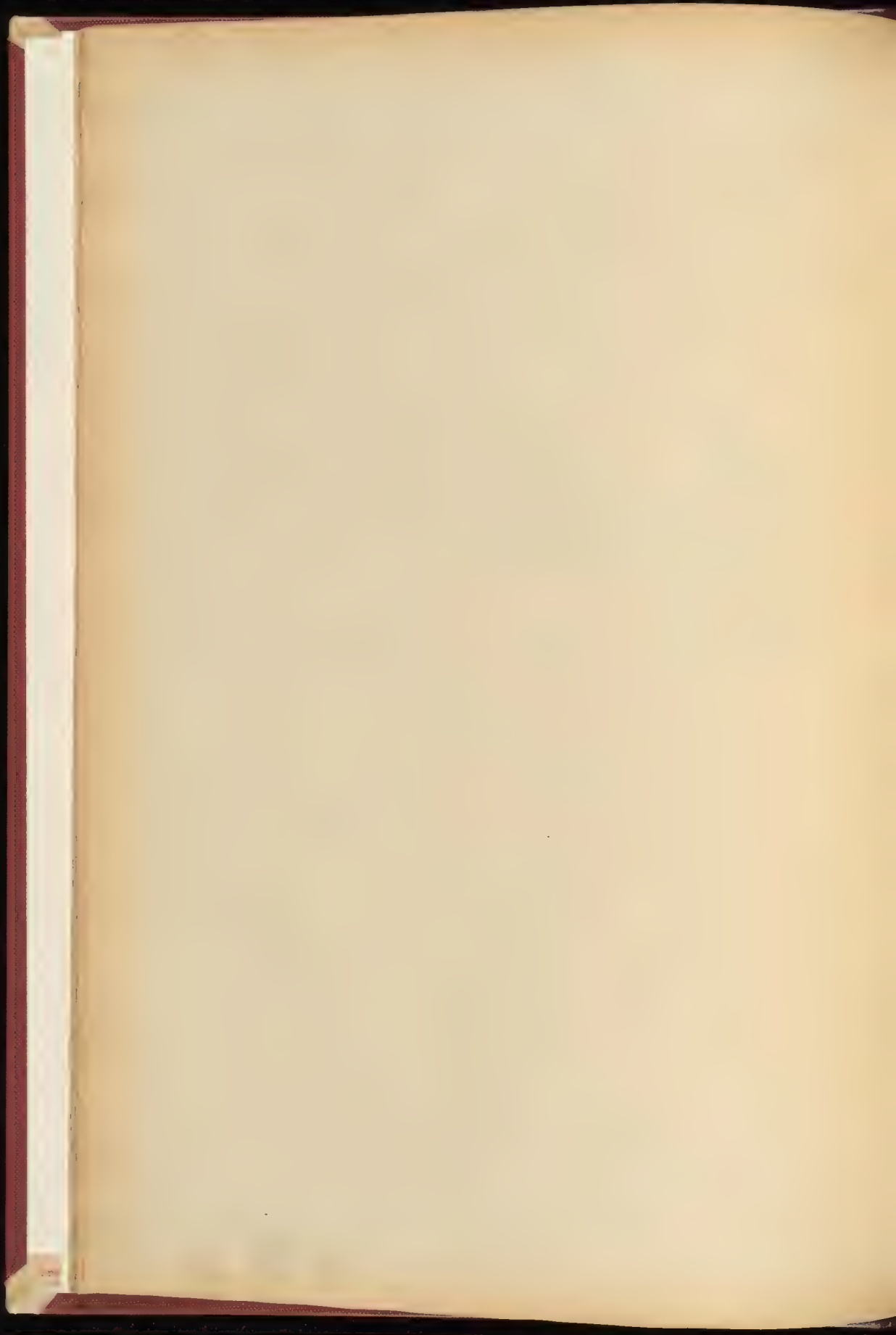




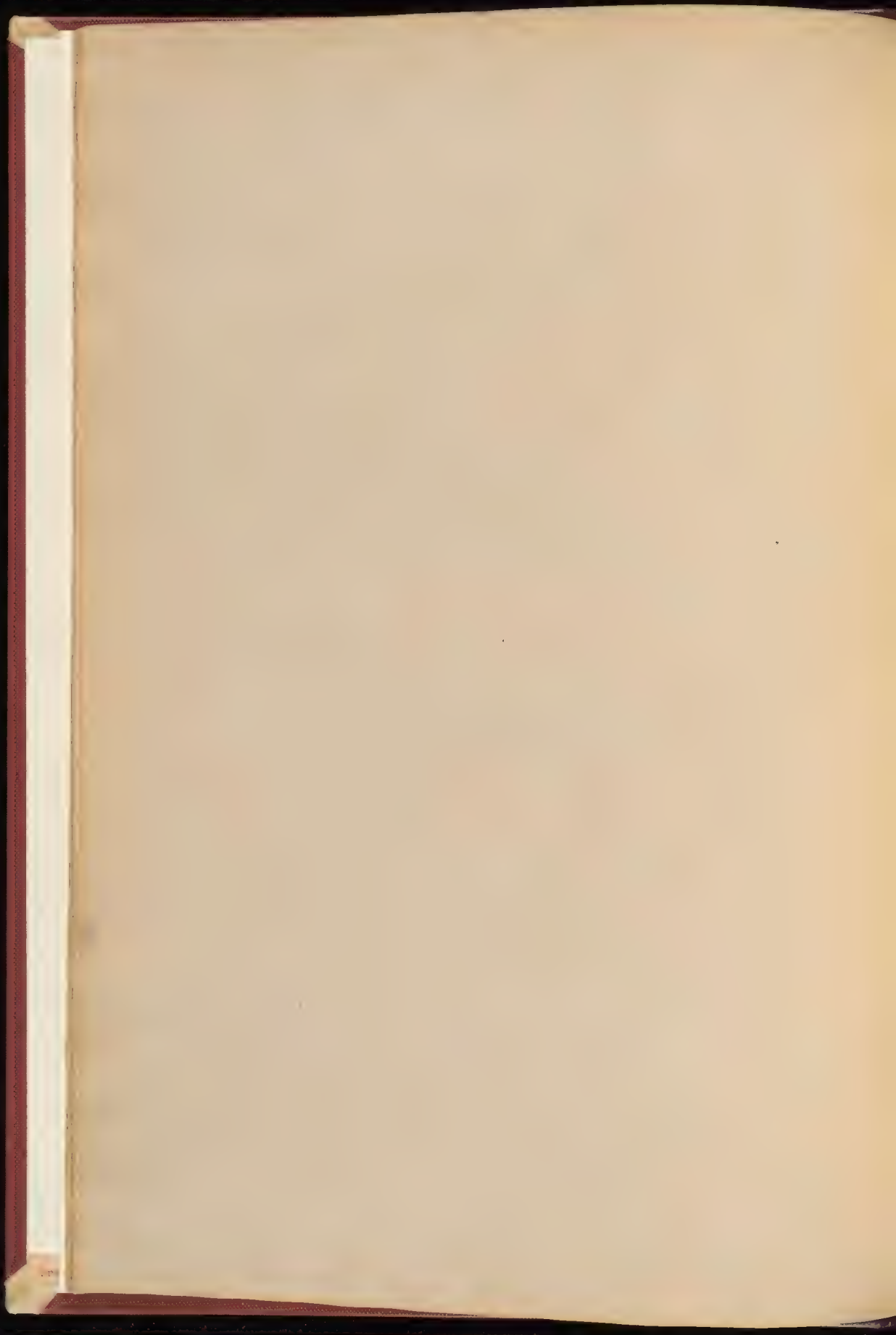






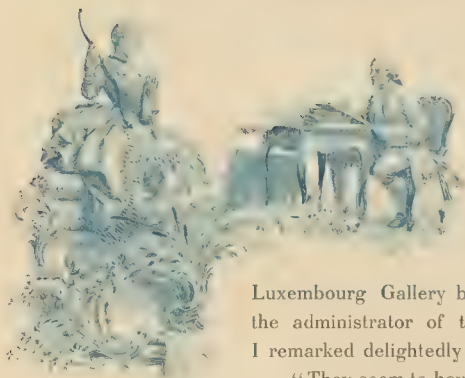








## PREFACE



Standing recently before the pair of water-colors by the late Jules Jacquemart, just presented to the Luxembourg Gallery by M. Barbet de Jouy, the administrator of the National Museums, I remarked delightedly to a friend:

"They seem to have been made at a flash, like the image of a camera when you lift the cap."

All the quality of the impromptu distinguishes these two "impressions" in water-color. In one, you see a foreground of the foliage of the Louvre courtyards, and a horizon on which are printed the disc of the Pantheon dome, and, at the left, the spires of another church, or rather the extinguishers, for there are no spires in Paris—the religion of this intellectual capital always stopped short just when the spire was ready to go up from the tower into the sky, and accordingly you see only truncated belfries, frustrated turrets, and pignons threatening to become spires but sobering down into garrets. The second picture, also sketched from the Louvre courts, takes the view to the west; in the right foreground, the reparations of the Pavillon Marsan, with the scaffolds showing in the sunshine as a cobweb of shadows; and, in the middle, the black ruins of the Tuileries disguised by the great shining globe of a captive balloon, whose bulk swells behind the bronze horses of Napoleon's arch, and glows

like an opal with its coats of tropical gums. A hasty, yet acute, penetration is the guiding principle of these two pictures, succinct, convincing and authoritative as visions. They seem like the glance of some superior intelligence, hovering over the spectacle of Republican Paris regenerating—a glance that compresses and suppresses all detail, yet omits nothing.

My companion happened to be a specialist—a water-color artist, taken *in flagrante delictu*, with a bagful of “impressions” just caught in Spain, a man who, despising oil-color, has made himself a mere blotting-paper, always raging with the sacred thirst of “water.” His enjoyment of the new Jacquemarts was intense. In his opinion there ought to be some way of “putting down” the triumphs of Titian and Raphael in the Louvre.

“The reason they are so good is that they were all over wet at one moment. See that horizon,” he said, indicating the sky indented with the ambitious church-steeple that had not succeeded in becoming spires. “How the man sketches with his brush as he runs along! That silhouette of a church is intricate enough, yet it is all done with a single wash, and the high lights saved out are the bare paper underneath. It would have been a treat to watch the play of his wrist—sweeping the horizon like a racehorse, coming upon the churches like so many hurdles—the hand rises to the effort, the church is scattered upon the sky at a leap of the brush, a leap exuberant as fireworks, accurate as gem-cutting; and then the brush races along the horizon again, till it curves smoothly over the dome of the Pantheon. To have watched that hand at work would be to see grace personified, for at such a moment it included training, brains, swiftness and ease.”

“Could not your distant church have been sketched and modelled afterward?”

“Not rightly. I have tried it and every water-colorist has tried it. We would all like a royal road to efficiency. You may scrape out your high lights, and plaster with body-color, and dock and dress with the point of the brush; nothing equals a silhouette of transparent color, with its beautiful way of darkening to a crisp edge as it dries. That is what represents the effects of nature. That is the real plate with the hall-mark upon it. Your expedients and your replatings are the confession of poverty, and are cheap as the dross of tin.”

"These gems of Jacquemart's remind me," he continued, "of my experience with Q... last summer. We had been sketching together in a beautiful place in the country. Every day we had worked and perspired, but there seemed to be a plague in it, the effects would not 'come.' Each evening we brought in our studies, compared them, looked at each other, and gravely tore them up. One morning we met at breakfast, dressed for the campaign. 'I have an idea' said I. 'We have got to come down to the twenty-minute plan.' We went off to a place, sat down back to back, opened our boxes, and took out our watches. 'One, two, three, and away.' We splashed around like Lucifers in holy-water. 'Twenty minutes are up!' 'I must add just three touches,' said Q.... 'Not a speck,' said I, 'turn-to at something else.' That night we brought home a dozen studies between us. We tore up all but two. These had really some quality in them. They were in fact the only pictures from our club sold in the exhibition at B...."

A water-color thus comprehended has a quality of radiance, of ingenuousness, of lightness, serenity and ease, perfectly corresponding with some of the most delicious effects of the great primordial artist, Nature. A tourist painter will select certain days when Nature is working in water-color; the lights are thin and glittering; the fields and rivers throw up glancing reflections—lustre rather than depth is the effect touched by the divine Artist; but let the last gleam of day break with difficulty and heaviness from the ruptured thundercloud, and cling like dropping gold to cottage eaves and reddened tree-trunks, and the artist will say, "Nature has got her oil-color box on her knees; she is painting a Rousseau."

In opposition to the theory of water-color painting as understood by the French, is the theory of water-color painting as understood by the English. British water-color painting seems never to be able to forget that it includes in its national collection the cartoons of Raphael, the most important water-colors in the world.

"The English are praiseworthy," said an artist to me in Paris, discussing aquarelle, "they work so hard and put in so much conscience. There is not much freshness of color left after the operation; but there comes up a literary kind of interest in the work, as you see how much thinking the painter has given you. He will comb out every

straw of a wheatfield—what a French artist would cause to glisten magically with a sweep of color. But a patient English cartoon has its rights. You look at it, and miss all brilliancy, all accident, all magic; but there grows on you 'another kind of beauty in detail.'"

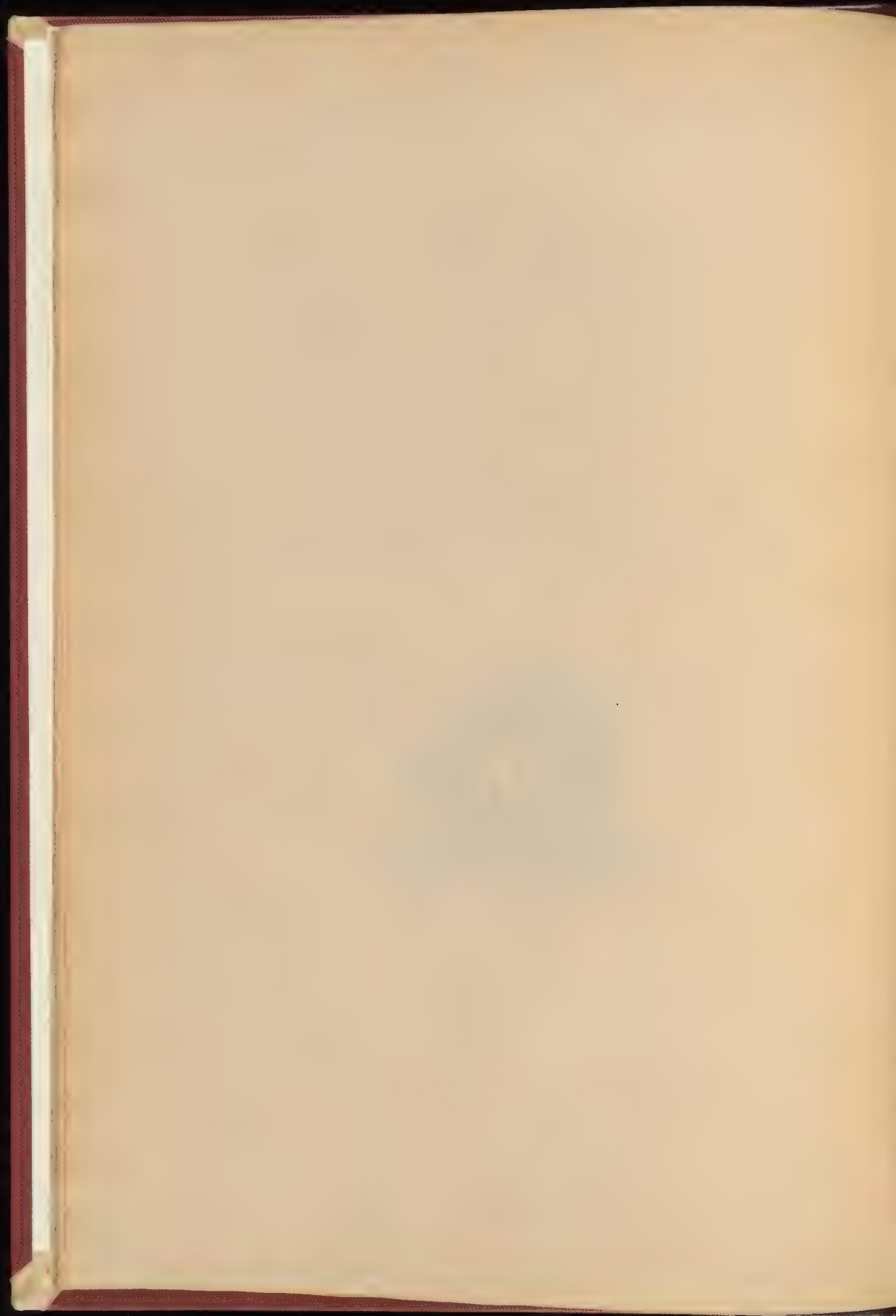
The present work, evidently, is dedicated to a special school of water-color art. The Society of which it is the voice is a young Society. The illustrations are either Photogravure plates, which are printed in tint so as to better suggest the lightness and felicity of water-color, or fac-similes from pen-sketches illustrating something in the career of the artist. The whole work has been prepared under the supervision of the celebrated art-publishers Goupil and Company. There are hardly any examples of a book of this importance printed in France with English text. Any typographical errors which may electrify the reader must be set down to the ineradicable characteristics of the French compositor; they may be considered as so many graces, intensifying the pleasant foreign flavor of a work prepared in Paris for America—a Fourth of July feast, as it were, with French dishes.

EDWARD STRAHAN





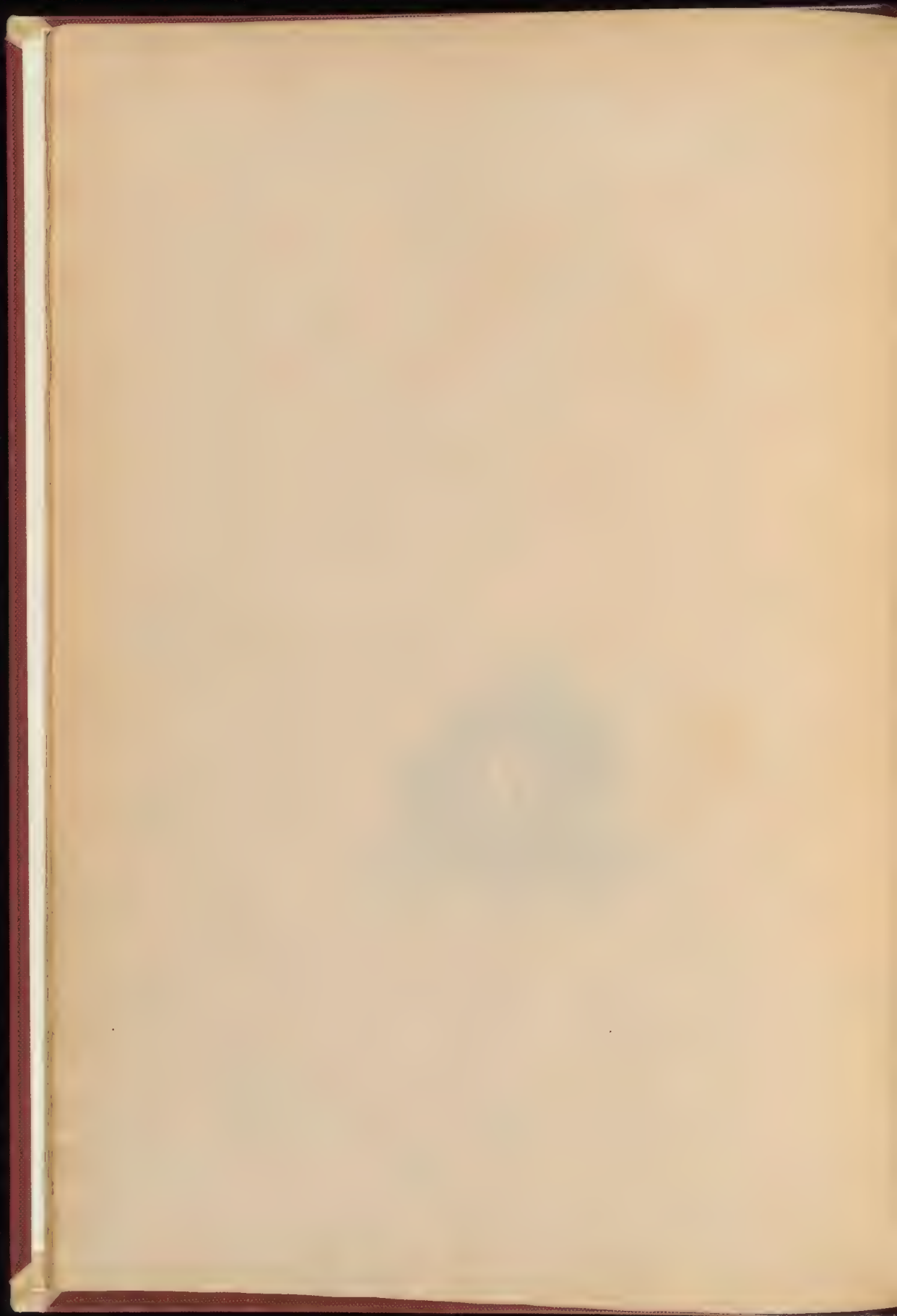






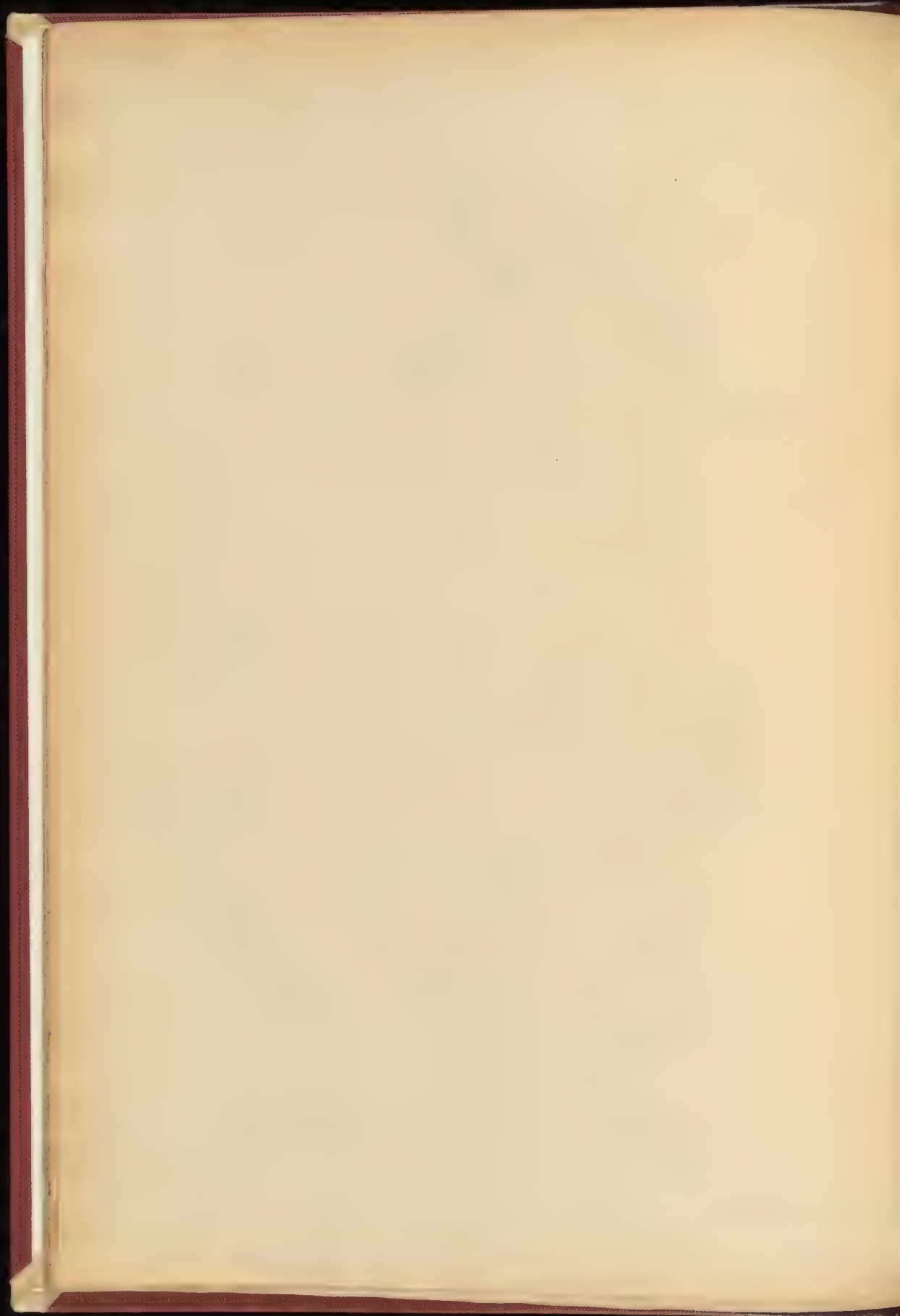




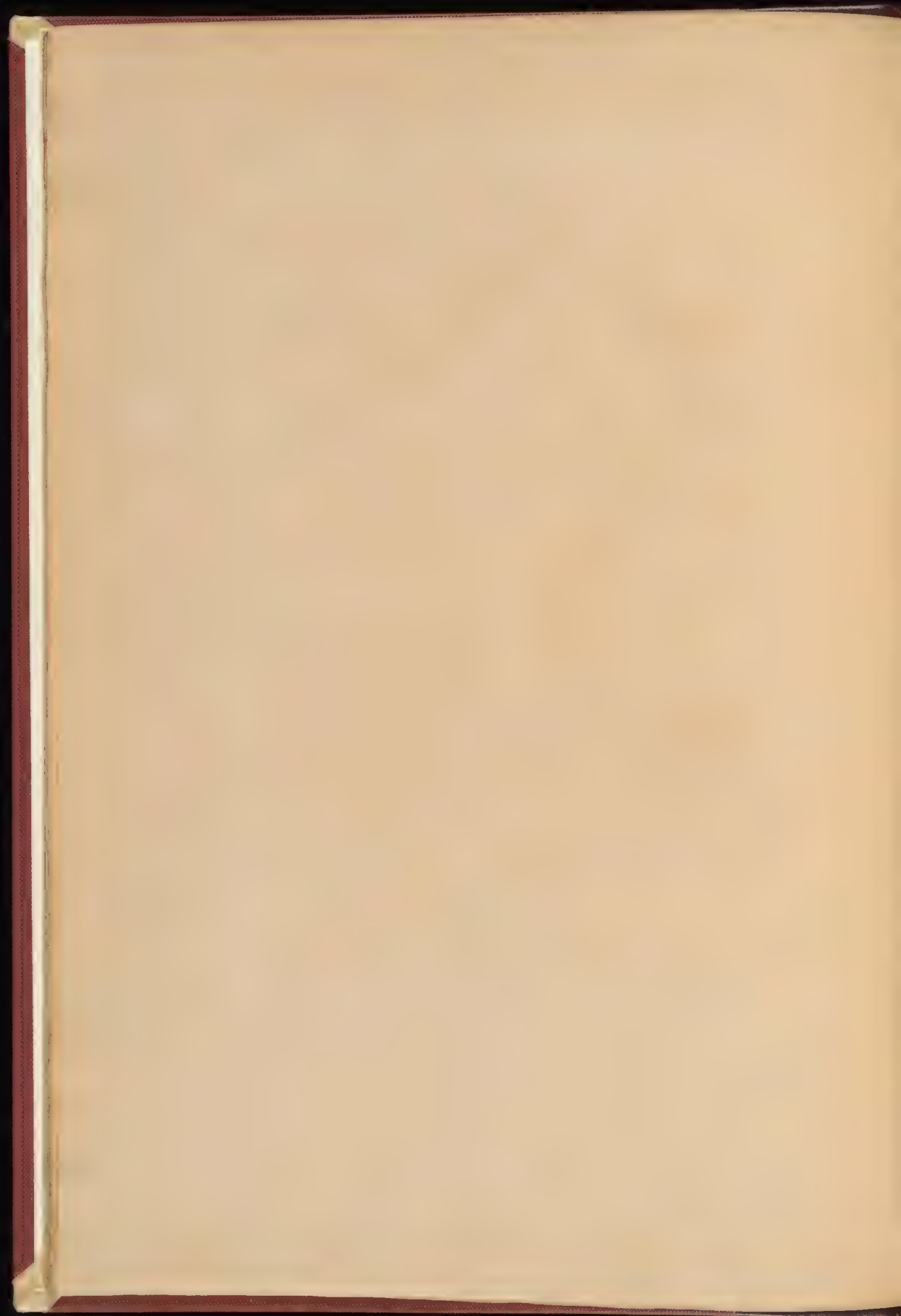














## LOUIS LELOIR



Defining his own position between Joseph and Horace Vernet, the clever Carle Vernet used to cry : "Son of a king, sire of a king, never a king." Such are the dynasties we meet with in painting. Let science explain the origin of these talents cultivated and cherished in a single family by hereditary privilege.

Painter's son and painter's brother, Louis Leloir comes of good artistic stock. His father, Auguste Leloir, was a historical painter, and his mother, as Mlle. Colin, a painter of miniatures. His youngest brother, Maurice Leloir, has received his lessons from this professor of forty years old, who is just in the flower of his talent and at the height of his reputation. It is a family of artists, of most honest artists, frankly in love with their art, and completing the gifts they have from nature with that merit which is not to be despised in any profession, conscience.



Conscience in art, as I mean it, is study and preparatory labor, incessant research and careful choice of the best; it is all those unusual qualities which fortify a seemingly careless and impromptu work with its foundation of patient toil and anxious seriousness. The color-gift is nothing or is very little without culture and care. To-day we find it impossible to satisfy ourselves with those styles that are picturesque, but lack grammar and spelling, like the letters of Marshal Saxe. In an aquarellist like Louis Leloir, beneath all the fancy and the exquisite animation, there is the accuracy of a trained draughtsman; he consents to dress off Nature with beautiful tissues, slight and woven



out of sunbeams; but beforehand he has studied her and held her close; he follows her outlines rigidly, and gives to his first design what has been called, by a striking expression, the intensesness of the mould.

Do not take every painter of caprices for a dreamer. They do not all discern the world and their own dreams merely through the blue smoke of a narghileh; they seize them as they pass and incarcerate them in the studio where they labor; be it Morgan or Urgèle, they compel the winged Fay to pose for them willy-nilly, like any mortal; they hire her as a model; they will not open the window for her until after they have drawn her figure from nature; when they have thrown upon the water-color sheet or the painting canvas her figure finished like an academic study, then they dress her up in the tissue of their fancy, be it silk or velvet or cloth of gold, or stuff of "the color of the time," like the ass's hide of Perrault.

Louis Leloir, like Heilbuth and so many others, is of those artists radically original, who have yet begun by rigid drawing and correct study; now that they are emancipated, and disport themselves freely in the poetry of the time or in their own visionary caprices, they retain none the less the memory and the support of their solid primary lessons.

Certainly we should have been unable to predict that Louis Leloir, beginning at twenty years old with his religious pictures and his compositions drawn from Virgil's antique, would become at forty the evaporated and refined water-color artist devoted to portraying Parisian and society subjects, Spanish guitar-players, soldiers of fortune in distress, or sworded gallants in quest of adventure. But his culture and mastery of design, derived from hard lessons at the start, render these charming toys singularly real; he will paint a fan with so much study as to make it fit for a gallery-picture. There is no loss of grace, the allurements are as profound, but the worth of the thing is so much the higher.

Louis Leloir is a master very ingenious, very attractive, very seductive and very French. Like a sly smile at the corner of a lip is the spirit at the tip of his pencil—the sharpness of the observer, of the gentleman who wants to please, too perfect to fall into affectations or caricatures. His talent is of the choicest seed remaining to us. In the

visions he presents of lovely girls in wings of moths, there is something like a Shakespearian poetry made Parisian. Queen Mab would have chosen her maids of honor among these delicious damsels, with hair impossibly done up like so many statuettes of Jean Goujon. The series of Louis Leloir's works in this branch of water-color decoration is like a stage set with the Midsummer Night's Dream, as translated by some Paris poet of the family of Musset.

At the Universal Exposition of 1878, as an oil-color painter, he marked with some new victories the summit gained by his contribution to the Salon of 1868, where he showed a "Baptism in the Canary Islands," destined for the Gallery of Versailles,

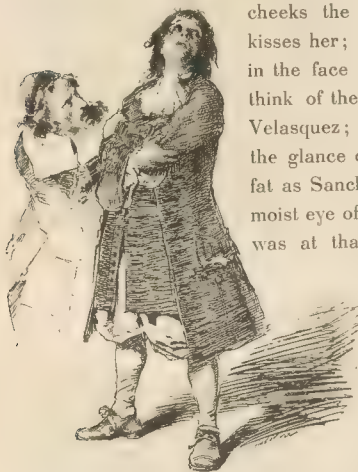
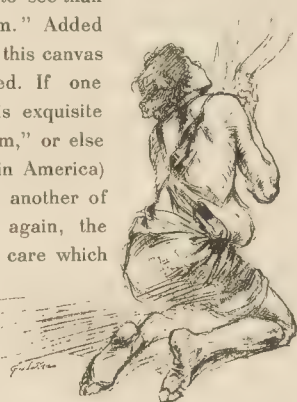


or more particularly by that of the 1869 Salon, where his "Temptation" was displayed, along with a couple of water-colors in which the mark of the master was already seen. How many times I have felt myself stopped, in the cast-iron cloisters of the Champ de Mars, by the collection of works by Louis Leloir! I acknowledged repeatedly, not without reason, that among all the painters of familiar scenes, he is perhaps the wittiest and the most delicate. What can be more exquisite, more ingenious, than the "Baptism," one of Louis Leloir's best canvases? "The Favorite," "The Repast," the "Spaders at Tréport" — with their spades in their hands, so natural and true, so attractively colored and drawn—formed, along with the "Temptation," a cabinet of treasures in the Champ de Mars. As for the "Temptation," (now in the Dousman Gallery at St. Louis, in America), it showed us a hapless monk, in his brown frock, urged towards pleasure by irresistible daughters of the fiends, more than half undressed. How flesh-like were the nudes, in this work, as well as in the aquarelles! This was not the moon-light color of the temptation-scenes of Tassaert, it had more of life, yet it preserved the same poetry. "People would faint over a painter like Louis Leloir," some one remarked to me at the time, "if they met with him in a foreign exhibition."

The "Baptism," too, which we found there once more, was worth a long pause. It is a work carried out well, and a very triumph of healthy good-nature. Is not the scene charming, with the relations and the musicians collecting to smile with all the frankness in the world over



the new-born who is being carried to church? Louis Leloir has never had a better inspiration,—even the laughing monks of poor Zamacois, in earlier days, were not more pleasant to see than these gladsome people of the "Baptism." Added to this, it was a feast to the color-sense, this canvas of a tone so happy and so full-flavored. If one wishes to mention a masterpiece in this exquisite style, one speaks either of the "Baptism," or else of that "Grandfather's Birthday" (also in America) so crowded with slyness and geniality, another of the painter's grand successes. There again, the fabrics are represented with that special care which our French painters give to accessory matters. There are gray velvets, green silks, in it, which are simply superb. And what is better, there is a little astonished face of a child, whose



cheeks the grandfather squeezes while he kisses her; and a truthfulness tenderly felt in the face of the old man, who made me think of the captains of yore brushed by a Velasquez; and such a pathetic delight in the glance of the ancient servitor, a man as fat as Sancho, looking on the scene with the moist eye of a good faithful dog! Louis Leloir was at that epoch in the full possession of his talent. But already one felt one's-self as much drawn towards his water-colors, so vivid, so alive, so warm, so rich, as towards his paintings in oil.

Besides, it is the water-color artist who ought to show in the foreground, in the present book.

None manages like him the aquarelle. The "White mice," the "Repast," the "Girl playing a Flute," the "Blue-Bird," have kept their place as



marvels, even since his recent works. These things have for their finishing-stroke, correctness, added to their life, their caprice, and their charm. Compare these delicious creations with the graceful water-colors of Eugène Lami! There is a whole epoch between the two men.

In this art so admired just now, and so well adapted to our modern manners and tastes, Louis Leloir has struck a note that is perfectly seductive. I long misunderstood aquarelle. It needed the dazzling effect of the first water-colors of Henri Regnault, like some rich unpacking of carpets from the East, to open my eyes. Then arrived Louis



Leloir, with his own peculiar spell, his something that breathes of the beyond, his vaporous aërial quality, and the seduction was complete.



An aquarellist is a decorative painter who often does a Paul Veronese on a slip of paper. Théophile Gautier, the friend of the felines, said very neatly: "Heaven gave cats to man to permit him to caress the tiger." We might say likewise that certain artists have adopted aquarelle to give themselves the dream that they were dabbling in grand fresco-work. And indeed, we might enlarge a fan by Louis Leloir and have the most exquisite of ceiling-pieces. No visions more elegant than his are to be found among the Venetians of the time of

Tiepolo or the French of the age of Fragonard.

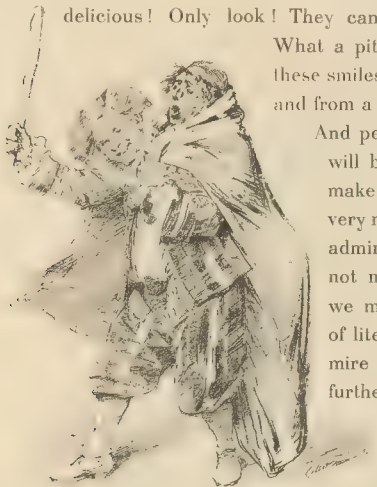
To confess the fact, these artists who like him have taken up again the line of the decorative painters of the eighteenth century,



such as Fragonard, Watteau, and Boucher, have done so along with a reality and certainty of the very truth which those great charmers cared very little about. But Louis Leloir, of all refined spirits the most modest—Leloir, for ever seeking and hitting marvellous effects without bragging of having got them fast, Leloir may please himself in advance with the thought that posterity will raise the bid on him very certainly. People will lean over the cases which will contain his fans, in the Exhibitions of Decorative Art of the next century, just as people go into raptures now in the Exhibitions over the wonders of the last-century masters. We shall not be there, indeed, to watch the pretty charmed faces of the charmers yet unborn, who are destined to utter the little cries of desire and captivation in front of our actual and present treasures by Leloir. "Ah! what a pretty one! Ah! this is

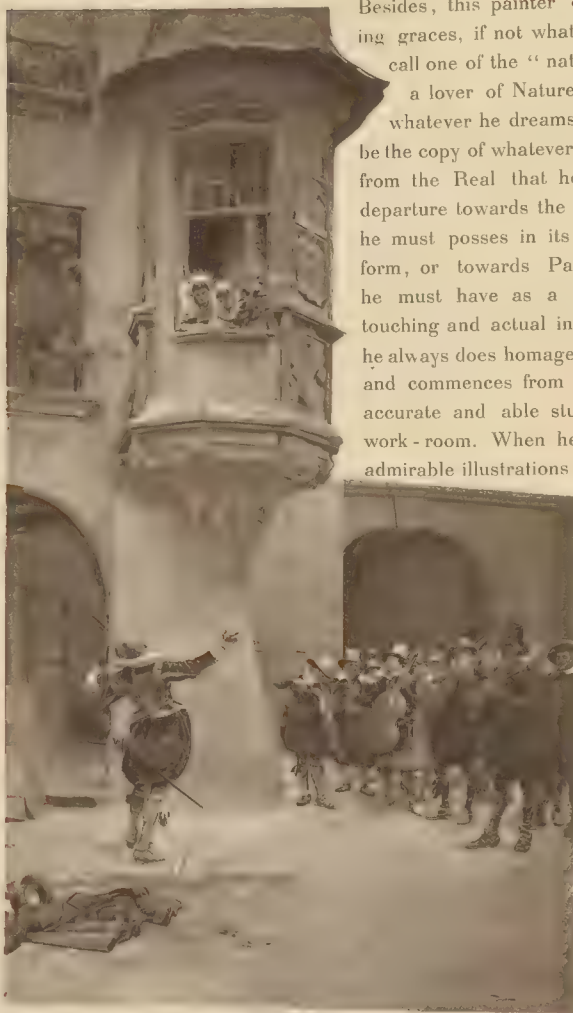
delicious! Only look! They cannot make such things now!"

What a pity it is that we can only taste these smiles of our posterity by imagination and from a distance!



And perhaps the Paris ladies of 19—will be in the right. "They will not make such things any more," at the very moment when they shall be most admired and celebrated—"they will not make such things any more," if we merely suppose that the tendency of literal realism, with its mixture of mire and rubbish, shall drag a little further or a little lower our arts and our literatures.

But, on second thoughts, not so. There must always be rosy auroras, and flowery springtimes, autumns with silver skies and golden foliage; there must always be ripe cheeks and lips perfumed like the strawberry, the smiles of women, white shoulders, hair like the ripened rye or like a cloud, as well as pearls for this hair and silk for these shoulders. There will always be in this world the transfiguration of thought—but there will not always be pencil-poets like Louis Leloir to express it.



Besides, this painter of the smiling graces, if not what we should call one of the "naturalists," is a lover of Nature. He paints whatever he dreams, but it must be the copy of whatever exists. It is from the Real that he takes his departure towards the Idea, which he must possess in its spell-giving form, or towards Pathos, which he must have as a penetrating, touching and actual influence; but he always does homage to this Real and commences from it. The most accurate and able studies fill his work-room. When he made the admirable illustrations for Molière,

published by Jouaust, —the edition which will be called, and is even now called, Leloir's Molière, the painter combined and studied everything after Nature. Co-











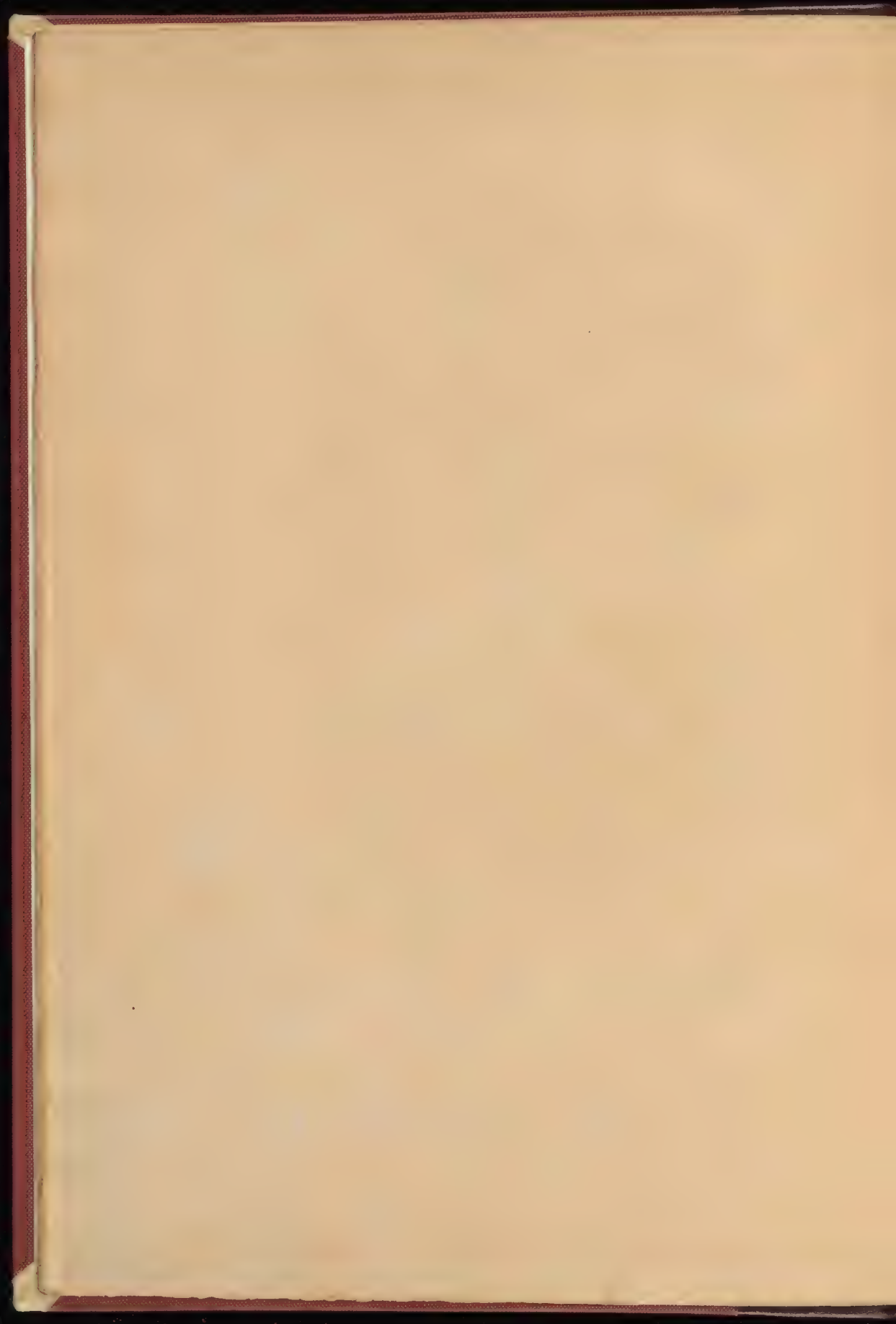






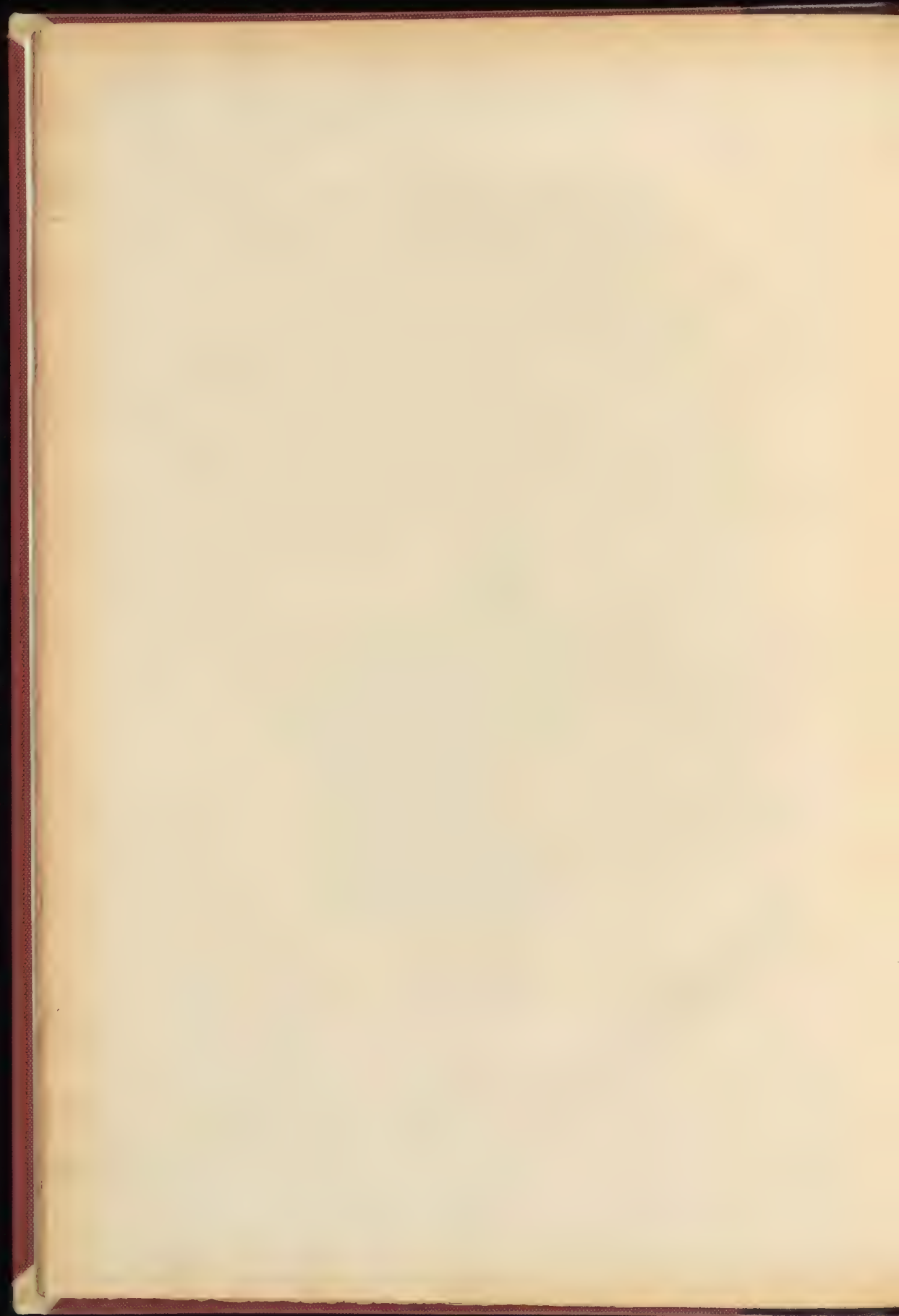




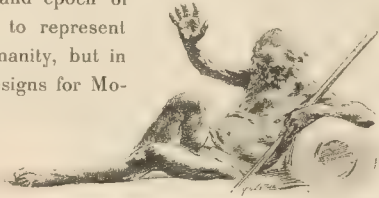








quelin posed for Mascarille, and Berthelier for Jourdain. When the mythological stage-goddesses of some of Molière's masques were to be costumed, he inspired himself after the statues of Coÿsevox, in such wise as to capture the very spirit and epoch of the great wit, so as not only to represent him in his eternal truth of humanity, but in the guise of his time. These designs for Molière are masterpieces; and even the surprising and admirable preliminary studies for them are worth exhibiting, along with the inimitable work in its entirety.



And the sketches are abundant in this studio, where costumes are rustling, where there are doublets of Spanish cut, and battered sombreros cut by the painter himself, with slashing shears, out of the felt. In this elegant studio, with its windows set in lead, with its wrought balcony over the



carved door, where some Isabel should show the tip of her rosy nose, there are such sketches as these: the foundered and grief-stricken cab-horse, to be

recognized in the pictures of old soldiers in retreat; a sword-hilt, copied at Nuremberg, for a Dictionary of the Sword, which Edouard de Beaumont is now illustrating; and the sketch of a group of strolling players, dragging their misery and their romance

along the roads;—the ever-amorous Lucinda trotting on the back of a mule, the bravo Matamora on foot, and the company following the car of Thespis reduced to a cart; it is a mixture of Captain Fracasse with the "Roman Comique," with something of the Picaresque like

"Lazarille de Tormes," and something of the French like Scarron; in one word, the stuff of Lesage. And-by-the by, what a set of illustrations Louis Leloir might give of "Gil Blas," since Meissonier, who once harnessed himself to this task, has renounced the intention.



Nor was it by mere chance that I thought of Gil Blas before this sketch. I had in mind, and have still, that delightful water-color thrown off from the faultless pencil of Louis Leloir upon a margin of a copy of a book by Paul de Saint-Victor, and forming an illustration for that very chapter of the volume where Lesage was in question. It showed the graceless scamps waiting for the arrival of Blas of Santillana, in ambush at the corner of a thicket, their muskets balanced on their iron stocks

ready to draw the bead, and practising

their trade in a brilliant and picturesque way, hat on head and smile on lip. I cannot imagine anything more beautifully drawn or more hardily carried out. These rascals are impudent and graceful; these merry companions of captain Rolando's are just what Lesage has described them, free drinkers, good judges of a piastre or the wine-but, of silk-goods or of the tap; rash and amusing rogues; perfectly willing to fleece the honest lad who journeys from Oviedo to Salamanca, but just as willing to laugh gaily with him after being on the point of gaily cutting his throat. I have never since



read that lively page of *Gil Blas* and arrived at the "Who goes there?" of the two bandits, without immediately seeing the Holland paper of that margin in Saint-Victor's book, and saying to myself that Leloir's *Gil Blas* would be a prodigious masterpiece, to follow his Molière.

Louis Leloir, in fact, has a most pictorial as well as a most literary conception of such Picaresque characters. Lesage's *Don Guzman d'Alfarache*, or Hugo's *César de Bazan*, would repudiate any other painter-in-ordinary. With gravest plausibility, he lends them a kind of pride of Braganza, a kind of heroic mien. As I am writing, I think again of a design sketched by Louis Leloir at the head of a dinner-invitation for a friendly company of artists called the "Rigoberts".

Two comrades, looking very much like sharpers, are touching their glasses together, or rather their enormous tankards. It is nothing, it is a caprice thrown off, but it is most exquisite and tempting and full of boldness; well, these two swashbucklers are own cousins to captain Rolando's pair of robbers.

Thus, when I visited Leloir, there was not a sketch-book or a study but recalled some artistic souvenir to my mind.

One charming, highly-finished water-color attracted me above all, in visiting this atelier, where a brown-skinned model was posturing, dressed in a black Castilian cos-

tume which awakened all my memories of the Museum of Madrid. This water-color was the portrait of a child. Leloir has signed some celestial portraits of women, such as *M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild* and *M<sup>me</sup> de Beaumont*. But this infantine likeness is astonishing for its air of life. It is a handsome little man, dressed in the blue uniform of the sailor, with the arms of the Royal British navy embroidered on the left sleeve; he is sitting in an arm-chair, with his legs swinging, half-bare, and with the hands braced upon the seat. How pretty he is, this little fellow with deep blue eyes and





long fair locks, firm-muscled—a fresh tidbit, with his blue socks, and his full black cravat, and with his left hand doubled up, which makes a triumph of hard drawing, as well as the little legs, where we feel the



workmanship of a master as accurate as he is simple. Undoubtedly there is an immense span between this water-color of yesterday and the "Daniel among the Lions" and the "Jacob and the Angel wrestling" of former times, or even the astonishing, brutal

"Black Sultan" of 1874, (in Mr. Bell's collection, New York), who watches with a pitiless animal smile his white slave who forgets herself in the sadness of her souvenirs; but the man who painted the flesh-tints of these slaves, the man who exhibited his "Massacre of the Innocents" nearly twenty years ago,

was preparing himself with those studies to paint, with his present sureness of touch—to design, with such an unswerving pencil—a figure like this childish portrait. This little firm-set sailor is the son

of Louis Leloir. He is all there, 'alive, charming; the fleeting grace of infancy, too soon



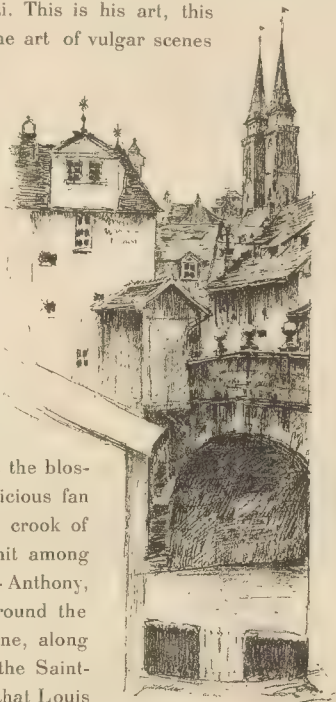
doomed to grow up in mother's fashion, is held imprisoned within this frame by the hand of a father who happens to be a masterly painter.

I feel myself, I repeat, in complete harmony with the ideas of Louis Leloir. He has a horror for what is low. In his capacity of painter, what he aims for is beauty. His fancies wear wings, they do



not wear clogs. He looks for the glistening of the star, not in the gutters, but on high, between the clouds. Like "the poet who beats up the fields," of Hugo's "Songs of the Streets and Woods," he is attached to the love-stories of Paris life; and he will conceal among the cornfields, not the dull couples that a country constable might detect, but fairy-subjects fit for Carlo Gozzi. This is his art, this is his taste, and his very nature. The art of vulgar scenes is distasteful to the refined, to the "unlucky," as La Fontaine called them—the "lucky," as I should rather say, those who can intoxicate themselves with a dewdrop, and would like to ignite their cigars, like Fortunio, at the glow-worm's lamp.

"In the village of Sèvres the flowers are as fresh as on Hybla, dear to the satyrs. Montreuil deserves doubtless, for its peach-trees, the vigil of the divine dragon." But at Sèvres Leloir could see, not the bleaching-factories, but the blossoms. It is well known what a delicious fan he painted; a monk crouched in the crook of a very lofty branch, as a good hermit among the boughs, and tempted, like a Saint-Anthony, by flying visions which offer him, around the green screen, pasties and champagne, along with smiles more inebriating than the Saint-Marceaux. Well, it was at Robinson that Louis Leloir found the theme of this exquisite fancy; the tree is a study of the tree of Robinson; it is the vulgar Robinson of Sunday milliners and calico breeches which he selects to be the bee-hive around which to conduct his flights of fairy bees, his fair damsels with wings of reddened brown. All his poetic dexterity is there. Long live the artists who thus can beguile us of our reality of every-day by reality itself!



He goes to Berne, and selects the enormous clock, around which he will group a circle of guitar-players, with Swiss lasses, as red as apples, to tease them. He will cause the feminine luxury of by-gone times to live again, with all the extravagance of fabrics, and headdresses, and wimples, and guipures; he will represent some grand lady of modern time in all the captious fineness of her fascination. And in all this variety Louis Leloir will remain faithful to his ideal, which is to love and make lovely the grace, and beauty, and lustre, and color, and blossom, and very perfume, of Life. This blossom and perfume is what he has contrived to render, and there is something suggesting the quintessence and aroma of perfectibility in what he paints. He does not imitate the Watteaus and Fragonards, he continues them.

JULES CLARETIE









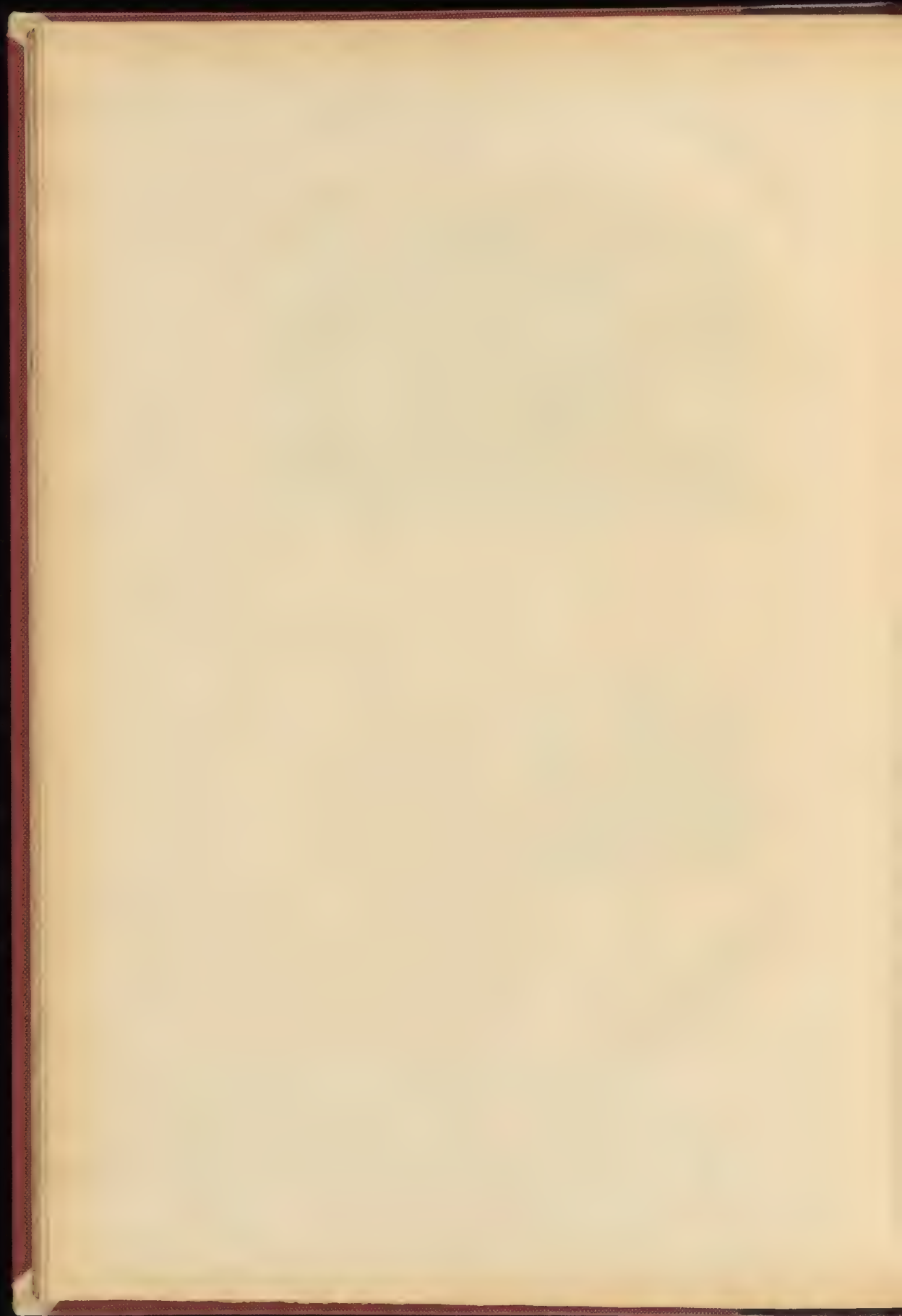




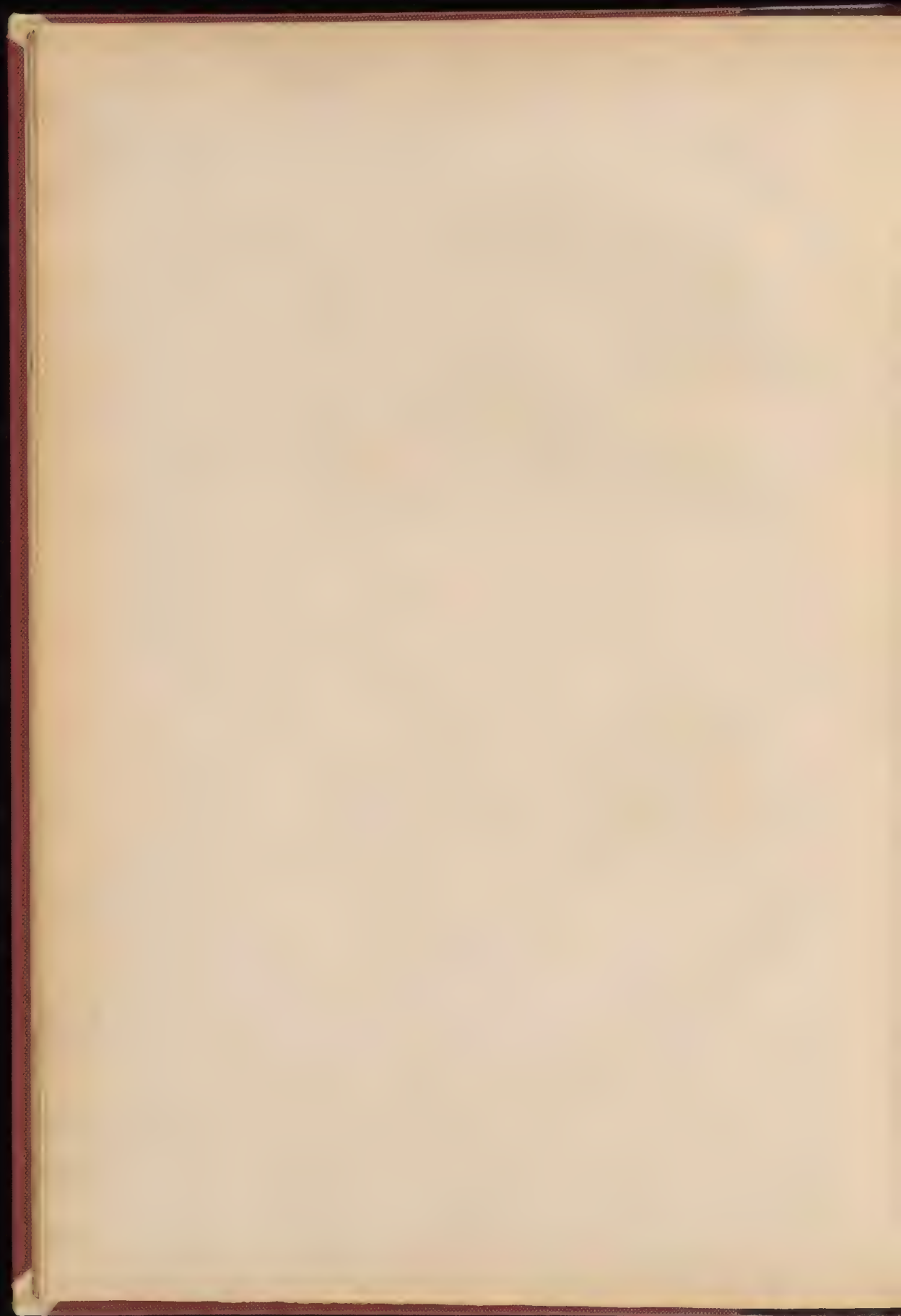
















## ÉDOUARD DETAILLE



Water-color is one of the intermediate branches of the painting art. It should be a means, but not an end. It aids the imagination of the artist, since it permits him to register an idea, to prepare a subject, to set a scene in motion quickly, with that sort of life which animates the impression of the thing seen. This method, being very simple, is proper for an impromptu. It utters what you had rather not forget. It is an expression of wit, of animation, of spontaneity. There are painters, Henri Pille for instance, who go about everywhere, as well in street-crowds as in official receptions, with a water-color case the size of a snuff-box, and who will make a masterpiece of humor on a visiting-card

in the crown of a hat. It is school-girl painting, cry those who have no idea of the way in which genius can work. They are not positively wrong either, since now-a-days, in all the professional schools, water-color is "very much worn," and young ladies practise it, pouring out over immense quantities of fans the refined and delicate perceptions of their sex.

There are abundant treatises on water-color painting; there have been



written manuals on the methods and theories of the art, intended to cultivate what I would call an artistic superfluity, were it not the means to many a person of gaining an honest living. These writers have determined the nature and quality of the paper to be used, the number of colors, the form of the palette, the size of the brushes, just as the rudiments of a language are set down in the foreign

grammars. But, on the same principle that you cannot create an author with grammars, you cannot create an artist; and the best theories in the world are powerless, when the students of them do not possess that unknown quantity which makes the author or the painter.

Art does not exist simply in those external manifestations of itself which are at everybody's elbow. It is in the thought, in the soul, in that elevation which conducts to the ideal. It can express by those silent terms which elude the analysis of our eyes, whole poems of gladness or grief, of tenderness or energy. It has a smile, it has passion, it has grace, whether in the human creature or the aspect of a landscape. It shows man too material sometimes, but on the other hand how often it humanizes Nature and material things! Think of the water-colors of Jacquemart,

those heavenly landscapes in which the grand Pan's breath is circulating, and confess that before him no one attained that faultless perfection which became his crown and his destruction!

At the very moment when I write these lines, I have just before my eyes a water-color by Daumier, which is a masterpiece, and in which with the aid of a few tints he recounts in Shakespearian terms a tragedy more lugubrious than the tragedies of Corneille. The scene is a fair-ground, at Saint-Cloud or Neuilly. Among the coulisses of the trees the painter has planted a fair-trestle, with canvas walls swelling to every breeze that blows. On the front flap is seen a picture representing a female colossus, the beautiful Zulema, lifting up her skirt with one hand to expose the swell of the calf, and holding in the other a rose, which seems to be broken off from a ship-biscuit. At the door of the booth, two beings, one of whom is guarding the money-box,—the second, the clown, a starveling, tall, and piteous under the felt, adorned with a butterfly, which roofs him in. The tortures, the hidden despair, the remediless melancholy on these two faces, you cannot even imagine. And still the drum, with its lid of ass's hide, resounds to the peevish drumsticks, and still the panic of hunger draws down the cheeks of the clown, whose grin finishes in a sob. No one will come in, no one will even stop to look. The crowd passes by, to the neighboring booth, which is modern and showy, with a complete orchestra and a branch of gaslights. Yet they must eat, these Pariahs, not to speak of the beautiful Zulema, and perhaps the little ones who swarm in the travelling van!



Art in its completeness is there, with the glow of the ray from within. It moves us, therefore it exists. I cite Daumier, but Delacroix and Barye were equally of the number of the eloquent, of the pathetic, of the tragical. But, in more modern times, do not de Neuville and Detaille occupy themselves with that soul of things which is a sister to their thoughts?



It is with Edouard Detaille as a water-color painter that I am to do in this chapter, and if I have taken a long tangent to arrive at him, it is because I give him the first rank among those artists who stir the soul, and because I needed the aid of certain examples to explain the fashion of poetry which is his familiar medium.

This order of poetry is something which I comprehend because I have long studied it. I know the man himself, and esteem him as I love his work. I have no need to remind the reader of his

proofs of ability as a painter, but I would fain point out the part he has played in the regeneration of water-color art which has taken place within a few years. With Vibert, with the Leloirs, with Worms and Berne-Bellecour, he has assisted in the foundation of the Society of French Aquarellists, thus giving strength to a kind of art which public indifference was ready to plunge into discredit. Neither Edouard Detaille nor his colleagues effected any innovation or discovery. For his part, he was content to give water-color its official rights, to conduct it to the banquet-hall, since the juries of the yearly Salons left it in the antechamber—among the poor

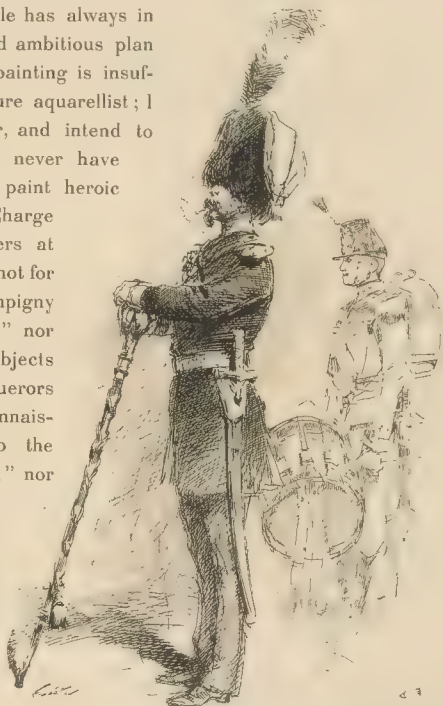


relations. He answered with his own person. He gave deeds as well as words, and thus we have had occasion to admire a whole series of pictures luminous with poetry, and vivid with all the memorable accidents of reanimated history.

But Édouard Detaille has always in his mind some noble and ambitious plan for which water-color painting is insufficient. "I am not a pure aquarellist; I am a historical painter, and intend to remain such. I should never have chosen water-colour to paint heroic subjects, such as "The Charge of the Ninth Cuirassiers at Morsbronn,"—certainly not for the "Defence of Champigny by the Faron Division," nor for such philosophical subjects of the war as the "Conquerors in Retreat," the "Reconnaissance," the "Salute to the wounded," "The Alerte;" nor even for the panorama of the battle of Champigny, nor that of Rezonville, which I am beginning at this moment with de Neuville."

Thus remarked Édouard Detaille to

me, one day when we had a good familiar talk together. He continued: "So many things pass before the eye of a painter, and so many subjects open to his thoughts day by day, that life is too short to carry out all the projects he has in his head. Water-color, so quick and convenient in its working, applies wonderfully well to the expression of matters observed while travelling, which have to be set down before the recollection gets dull. All the water-colors I have made are invariably traveller's notes, or



sketches of military reviews; but when I have a serious event to narrate, or an epical chapter, I execute it in oil. Oil will always be the proper vehicle for a deliberate composition.

"Water-color's grand advantage is in your not having to dead-color your canvas and let it dry. You can do your water-color all at a stroke, and thus you keep up the 'go' necessary to carry on your work.

"I comprehend body-color with aquarelle, for I think we ought not to discard any of our means. Painting is hard enough without throwing away any of the helps you can get. Only try to paint a soldier's jacket, or his muddy trousers, with little touches of transparent clear color! So

I use anything to express what I have seen. I exhibited at George Petit's two drawings in which there was a mixture of charcoal, pastel, black chalk, water-color, body-color, and all."



There is a sharp confession of faith for you! It would set an art puritan in the sulks, but I am glad to publish it, for it harmonizes with my own way of looking at the matter. It has always seemed to me that an artist is only obliged to sell to the public his works, and not the secret which has served to create them. What is the hidden foundation of a masterpiece to us, when we have the masterpiece itself under our astonished eyes, palpitating with the soul of genius? Alfred de Musset used to get intoxicated; do we

know it when we read his lovely verses, or when we are touched by the cadence of his melancholy prose? There are sceptics among us who are just ready to become image-breakers—men who would scrape the monuments and decapitate the statues, and break up the fronts of the temples, that they might examine everything with a lens—and see at last the maggots which are careering in their own heads. What are we coming to if this goes on? What infinite damage this method of criticism will set going! Let these worthies content themselves with admiring, when the thing is worthy of admiration. Let them admire



seriously, without reserves or preconceived theory. Let them especially abstain from impertinently jarring on our own enjoyment with ignorant remarks and baseless objections.

The first aquarelle of Édouard Detaille's dates from 1867; it is a trooper of the garrison at Poissy, a subject exhibited at Francis Petit's, the father of George Petit, and sold for one hundred francs



only. In 1869 he did a "General at the avant-post," and a subject of "Cuirassiers à l'ordonnance, 1797," two water-colors of a trim and neat handling. In the spring of 1870 he left for Algiers; he went to Oran,

Tlemcen, Mascara, and Saida; then to Spain, where he viewed Valencia and Madrid, stuffing his sketch-books with drawings which he has never used, and which contain a mine of information.



Back again in France at the moment when the war was about to break out, Édouard Detaille volunteered and took part in several skirmishes. After an affair which took place in October, 1870, he was even reported as killed or lost. In

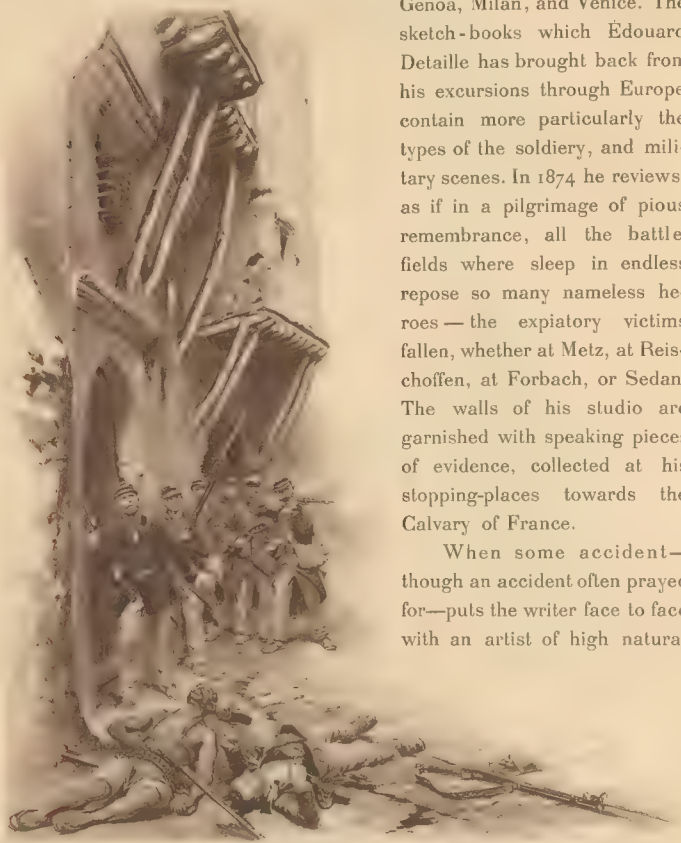
November of that year General Appert attached him to his staff as secretary. From that day he had greater leisure to study those "Horrors of War" which Callot once recorded in his truthful and manly language. He watches from a close position all the changes of the siege; and the protests of his revolted soul are breathed out upon his canvas, or recorded

in indelible traces in water-color compositions of a strangely awful character. We have from his hand, for instance, that haunting picture which makes us think of Holbein's "Dance of Death," and which represents a rank of Saxon soldiers struck by a mitrailleuse and fixed in their contorted postures.

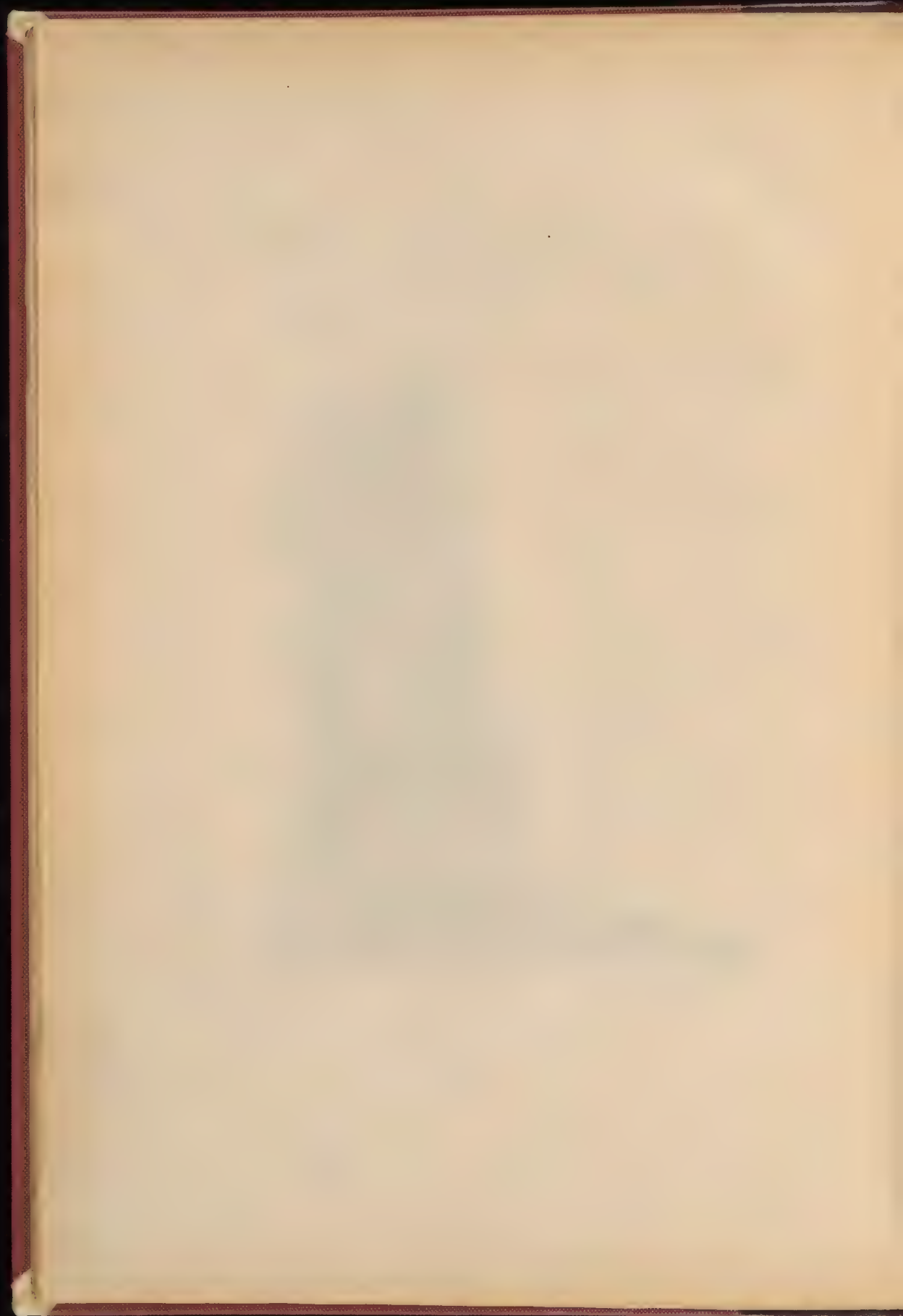
In 1871, a journey to Belgium and Holland, and in 1873, a tour through

Genoa, Milan, and Venice. The sketch-books which Édouard Detaille has brought back from his excursions through Europe contain more particularly the types of the soldiery, and military scenes. In 1874 he reviews, as if in a pilgrimage of pious remembrance, all the battle-fields where sleep in endless repose so many nameless heroes — the expiatory victims fallen, whether at Metz, at Reischaffen, at Forbach, or Sedan. The walls of his studio are garnished with speaking pieces of evidence, collected at his stopping-places towards the Calvary of France.

When some accident — though an accident often prayed for — puts the writer face to face with an artist of high natural





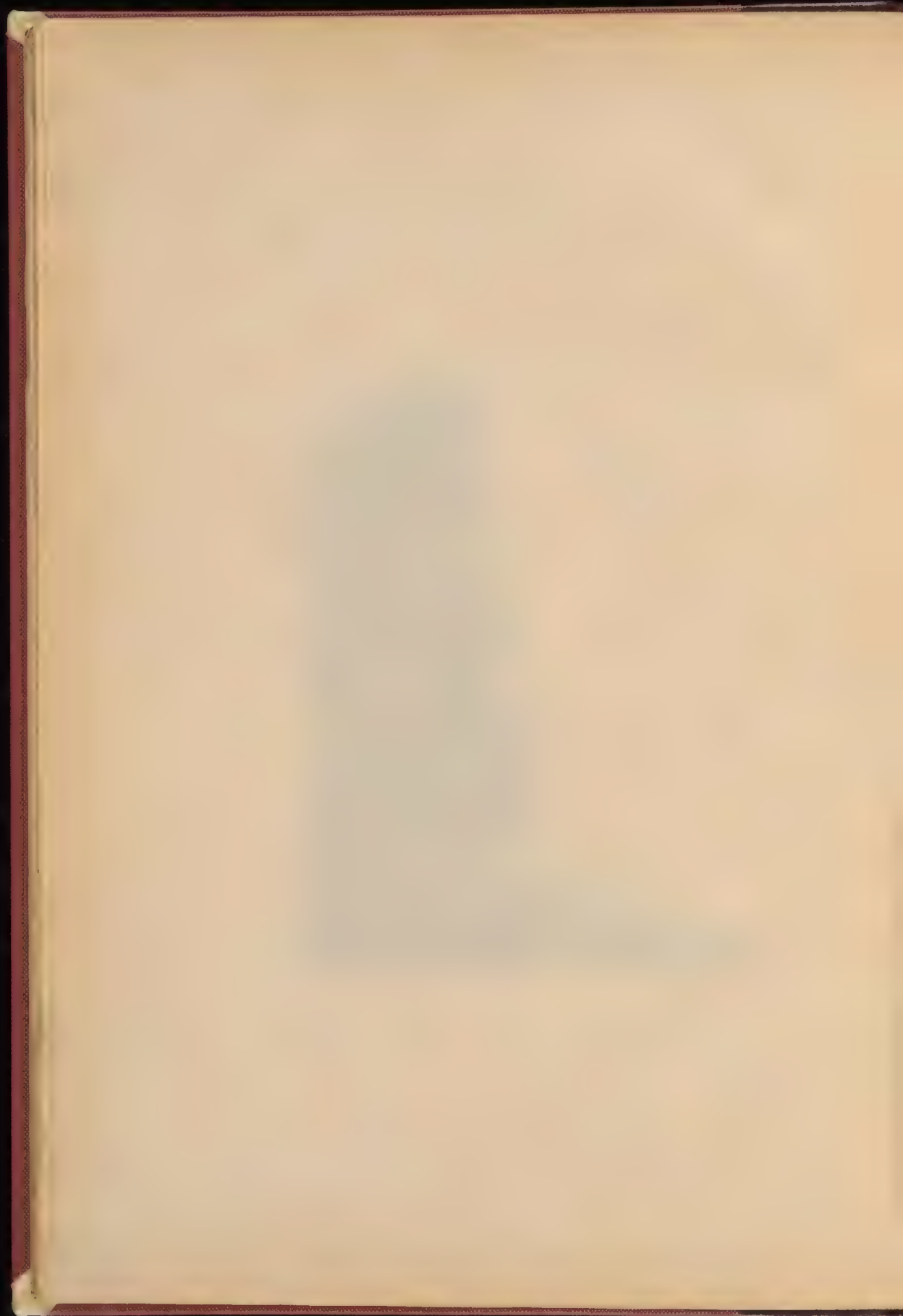




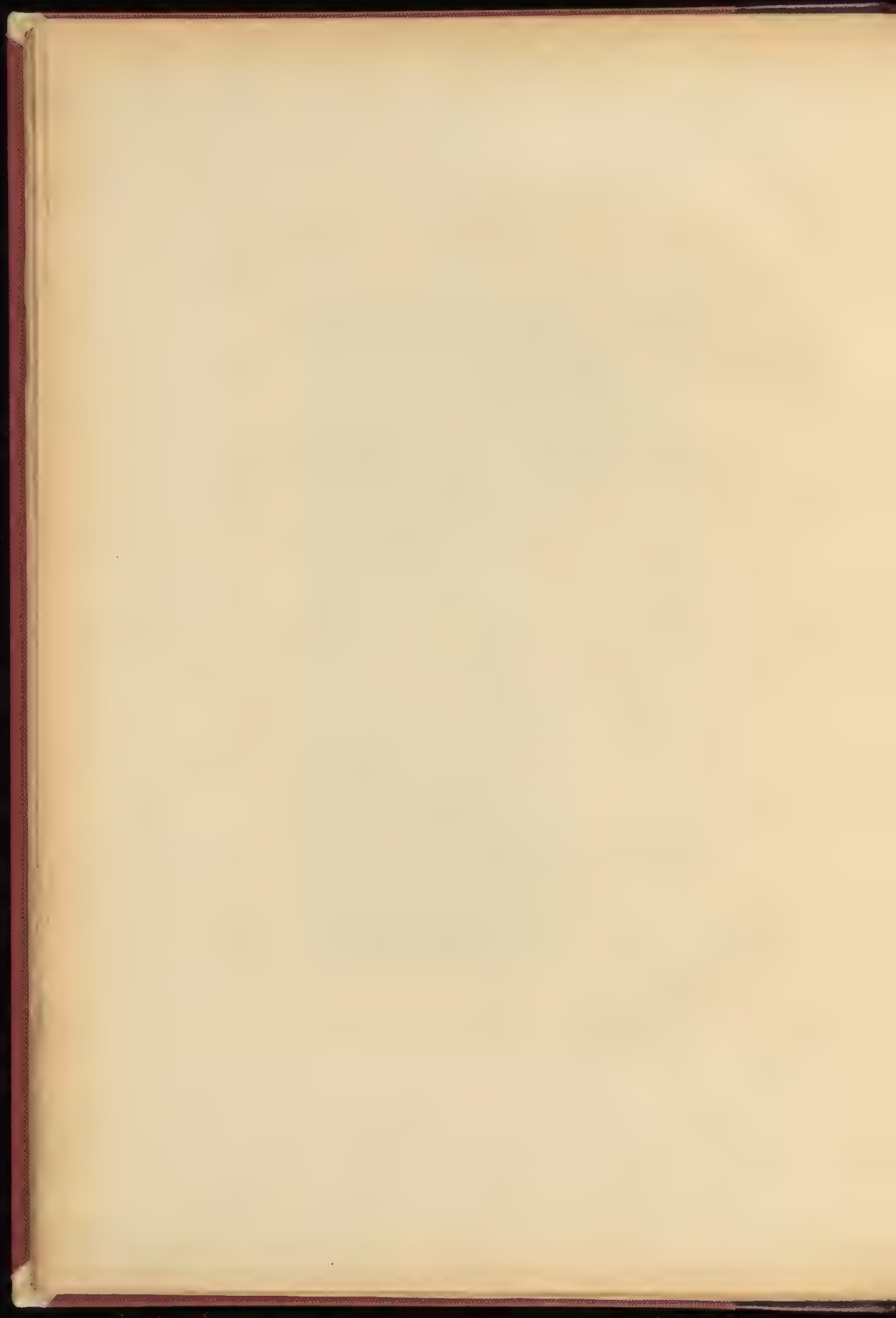




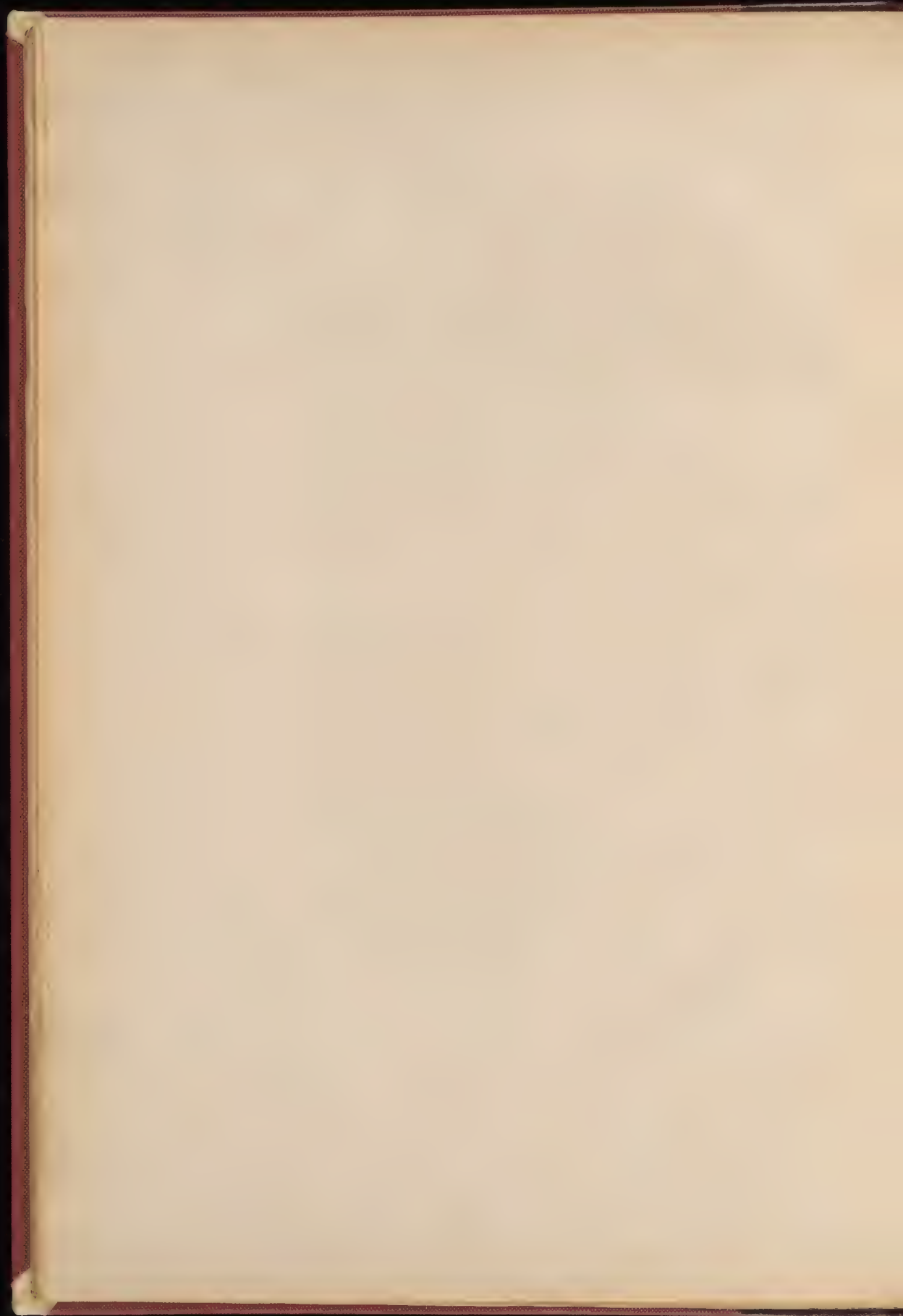






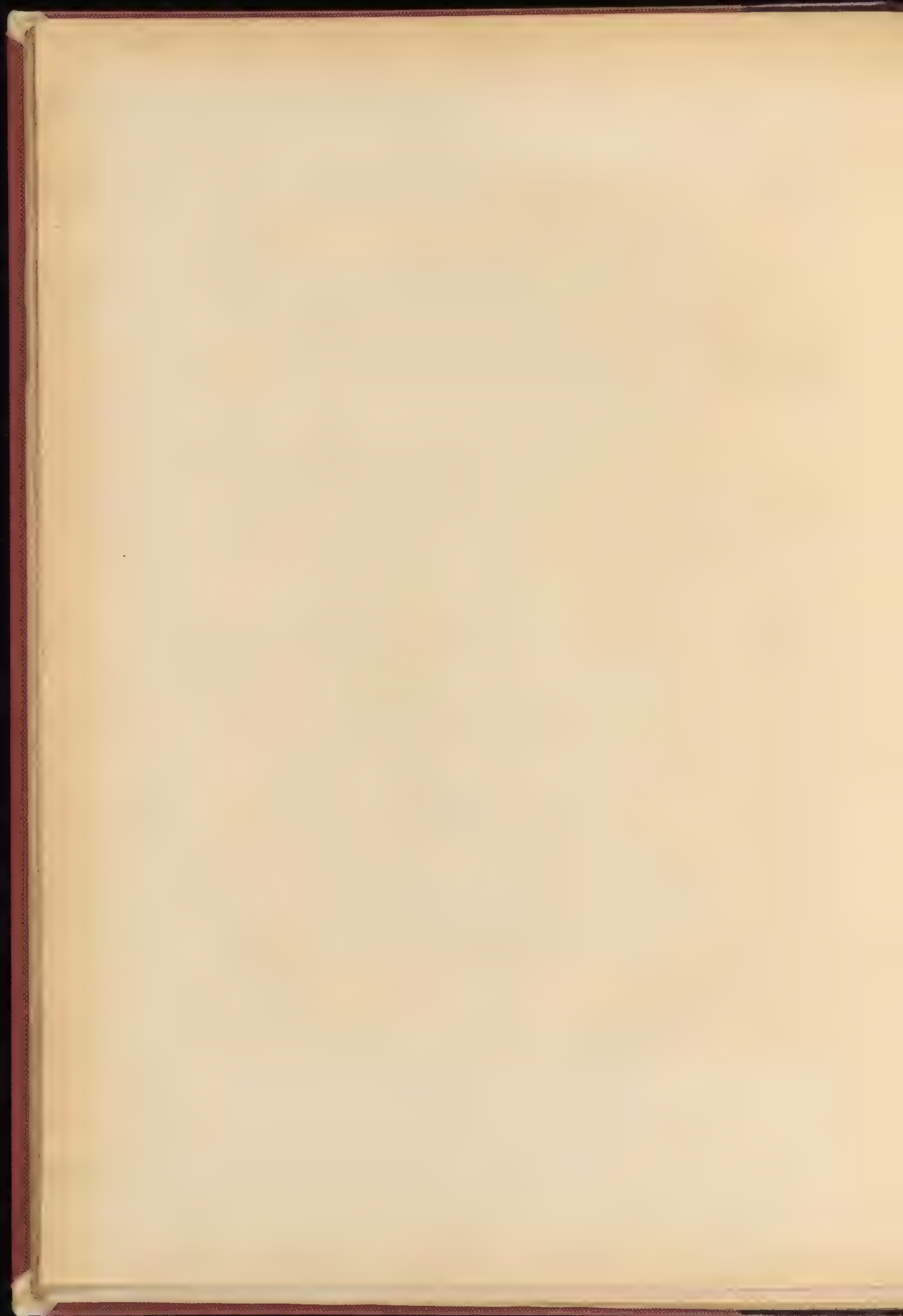












strain, such as Édouard Detaille, the undertaking is at once delightful and full of danger for the adventurer. Looking simply at the work achieved,

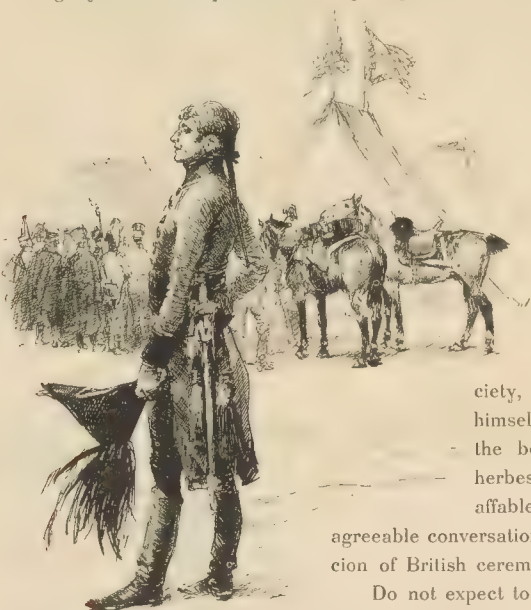
one is ready to say to the craftsman, "It is a lucky place that lets me meet you." And yet, one shirks to begin a study for fear of not working it up with good effect. This is a day when art has lost its true significance; when the painter is often a man who seeks both glory and the toys of the present; when the ideas that come into his head are really inspired by the false taste of the public, and when he works from the dictation of that public, instead of commanding it with his own dream and hopes and spirit. In such an epoch the painter has become a complex and elusive being, hard to grasp and therefore hard to describe. It is

needful to discriminate between him who creates and him who copies, between the brain and the hand. In a word, you must discern your individual before you can analyze his production. Thus have I always understood criticism, considering it a barren business to talk about a canvas before knowing what was in the thoughts of the artist who gave life to it. I like to see the individuality that attracts me, in its *habitat*, in its familiar surroundings, encircled with objects that occupy its affections and which may define its tendencies on its aspirations. The familiarity of a dressing-gown is full of revelations. With one class it strips off the veil from a pompous



posture; with another class it reveals simplicity or kindliness. Some of these details are typical, and serve to enhance or belittle a character and to define a temperament.

Édouard Detaille is exactly the man of his pictures, what I would call a tragedy-character quieted down by etiquette. He does not wear the



hat and feathers, puts no placards at the studio-door, uses none of that noisy advertisement which is usual with the modern thunder-manufacturer. Such as you

see him in society, such he shows himself in his retreat on the boulevard Malesherbes, a perfectly affable gentleman of

agreeable conversation, with a suspicion of British ceremoniousness.

Do not expect to find on his premises, on his field of action, a quantity of rich hangings, bits of furniture, curiosities, rugs, chandeliers, suspended from a coffered ceiling—you will be mistaken. His favorite working-room is of a monkish simplicity. It is surrounded with a gallery of pine, serving to contain specimens of soldier-caps, arms, uniforms collected from all the battle-fields of Europe, a collection fit to figure in the museum of artillery. On the walls, as I have already remarked, sketches and studies, made from nature wherever a worthy deed has been done, a sort of memorandum-book reminding the artist at every minute of the model he should copy from. Here and there, photographs of famous pictures, stakes set up by the painter on the

road he is to follow, and serviceable in the extreme. Easels, a table, seats, and that is all. The rest of the furniture is in the artist's head.

Adjoining the courtyard of his house rises the habitation of Meissonier, the honored master. In the shadow cast by the studio of the illustrious painter flourish the conceptions of his worthy pupil. Édouard Detaille venerates profoundly him who first took the scales from his eyes and made him what he is. He never alludes to him without respect, and justly; for Meissonier is a man who only lives for art, and may serve for

a model to all our generation of clever picture-makers, fortunate tradesmen who assort their talents in graduated glasses, and consider that the honor of the profession is less important than the money they make out of



a careless public by their compromises and renunciations.

In a work written as much for the future as for the present, or even more, I think it will be interesting to give here the list of some of the water-colors which have been signed by Édouard Detaille. Here are these aquarelles in the order of date:

1870. "The reading of the Placards;" belonging to M. F. Duparc; "The shot of the mitrailleuse"—dead Saxon chasseurs; "Souvenir of Villiers"—the battle-field of Champigny; belonging to General Appert. 1874. A fan, representing Prussians flying through the air with clocks under their arms. The Princess of Wales has the photograph hanging in her apartments. 1875. "Souvenir of the camp of Villeneuve-l'Étang." 1877. "The Ambulance at the review of Longchamps;" "Regiment of Cavalry returning

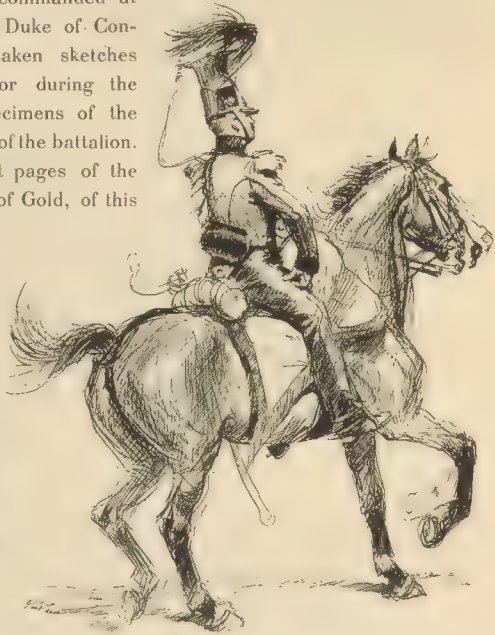


back from the Review at Saint-Germain." 1878. "The Inauguration of the Opera," a picture in the Luxembourg Gallery.

Édouard Detaille has worked a great deal in London, sketching in water-color, "Life-Guards at Regent's Park;" "Grenadiers at the Tower of London." He has campaigned at Aldershot with the first battalion of the Rifle Brigade, commanded at that period by the Duke of Connaught. He has taken sketches there in water-color during the exercises, with specimens of the officers and soldiers of the battalion. On one of the last pages of the roll-book, or Book of Gold, of this Rifle Brigade Detaille has painted in water-color a sketch of the present uniform.

Greatly fêted in England, welcomed by the officers and invited to sumptuous mess-dinners, and brilliant receptions, Detaille has carried off the English soil on the soles of his boots,

as he carried off the souvenir of all that was visible in the scope of his sight. No one up to the present time, even among the British painters themselves, could represent London like this Parisian of Paris. He has seen the giddy capital, with its palaces, its monuments, its broad river and docks, its proud luxury and its horrible misery. He has elbowed vice on the footwalk and drunkenness in the tavern, and out of all these spectacles of joy and shame he has jotted down whole note-books written with the crayon's point, and formed albums of inestimable value, with all the vigor,





the spontaneity, the pitilessness of the impromptu. Some pages of these sketch-books are as graceful as Dickens, some as bitter as Hogarth.

"The Tower of London during the Review" (Vanderbilt collection, New York), and the "Regiment of Scotch Guards returning from Parade in Hyde Park" have figured at the Aquarellists' Exhibition.

I would not pass in silence the subjects, always in water-color, taken from the Isle of Wight, from Cowes, and the barracks of the 42 Highlanders.

After England, Édouard Detaille examined Tunis, during the last campaign. Side by side with General Vincendon, he was present at the march of our army over a mysterious region, in pursuit of an unseen enemy, sketching at a gallop on the pommel of his horse's saddle. Now at Roumel-Souk, at Sidi-Abdallah-ben-Djemil, now at Ain, at Draham, at Ouldj-Souk, at Tabarca, "it was necessary to proceed across impossible and impracticable places, where the cavalry was unable to penetrate. It was a succession of quicksands and torrents, which on some days must be passed under driving rains, on others under a sun of melted lead. After this came the city of Tunis, Bizerte, Bona, La Calle."



"A Halt of the Vincendon Brigade in Tunis" dates from this campaign.

"Marshal Canrobert and General Lebrun at the grand manœuvres" counts also among the important water-colors of Édouard Detaille.

This composition is not easily forgotten, it breathes too impressively of the quietude and sense of possession which follow a triumph. The day's hardships are ended, and after a defeat inflicted on the foe, the victorious troops prepare to boil their broth for the evening meal in the

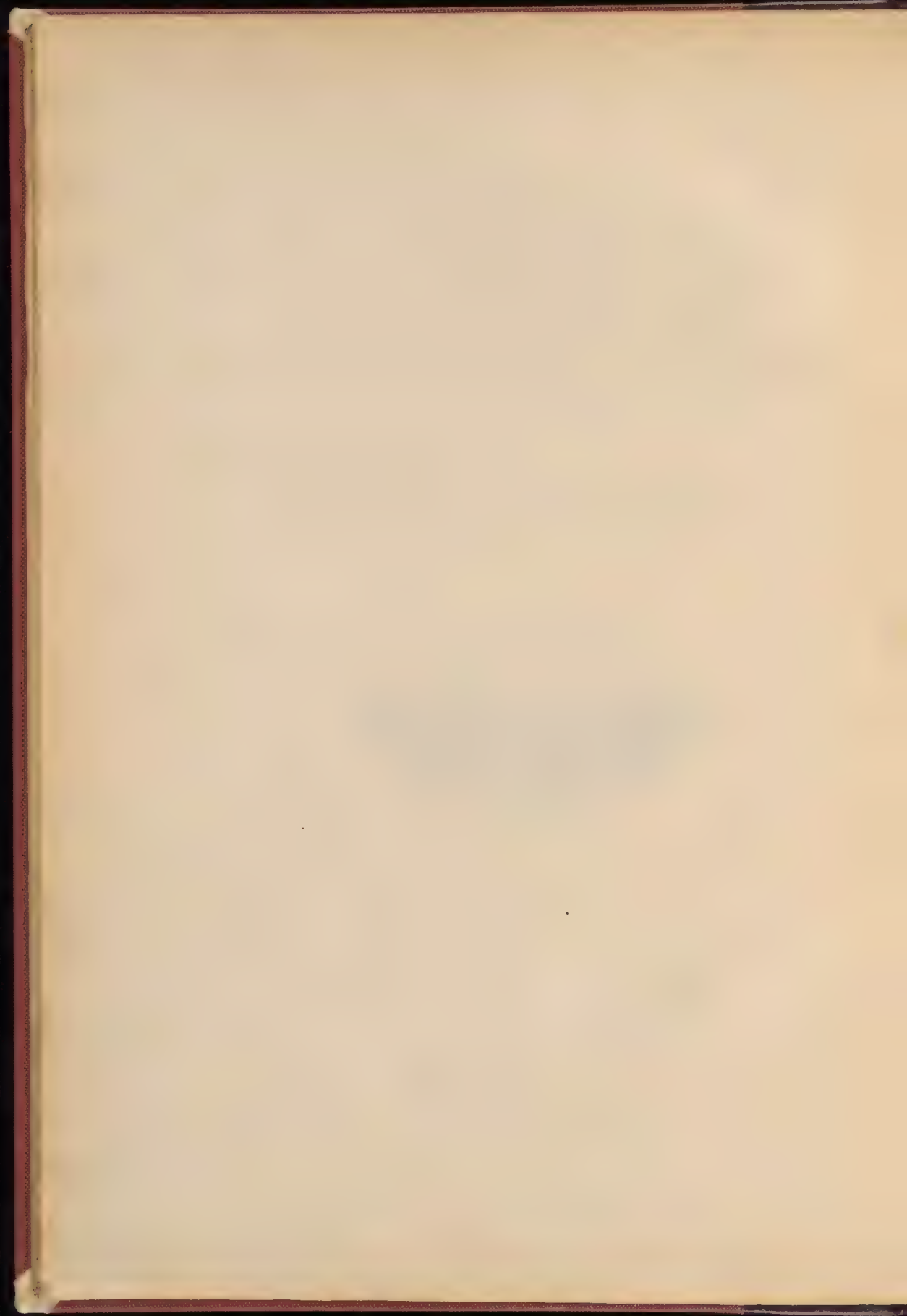
field just occupied by the enemy. Marshal Canrobert and general Lebrun pass in a carriage before all the officers of foreign nations who have come to watch the manœuvres. The incident has been chosen by the painter for the express purpose of bringing together a great variety of uniforms, arms, accoutrements, and specimens of national types of visage in all their contrasts. The more purely artistic part of the composition is equally well cared for. To relieve the turmoil of the numerous figures the artist places a pastoral hay-stack in the middle distance. The distance is made up of the last straggling houses of the village, gilded by the evening light, backed with vaporous blue hills, bathed in mists which rise from the earth, slowly creeping upward and losing themselves in a delicate and luminous sky.

To terminate, should be added a quantity of less important subjects, war-scenes, types of cavalrymen and foot-soldiers which will be interesting for consultation at a later day, as documents of the military life of our epoch.

ELGENE MONTROSIER









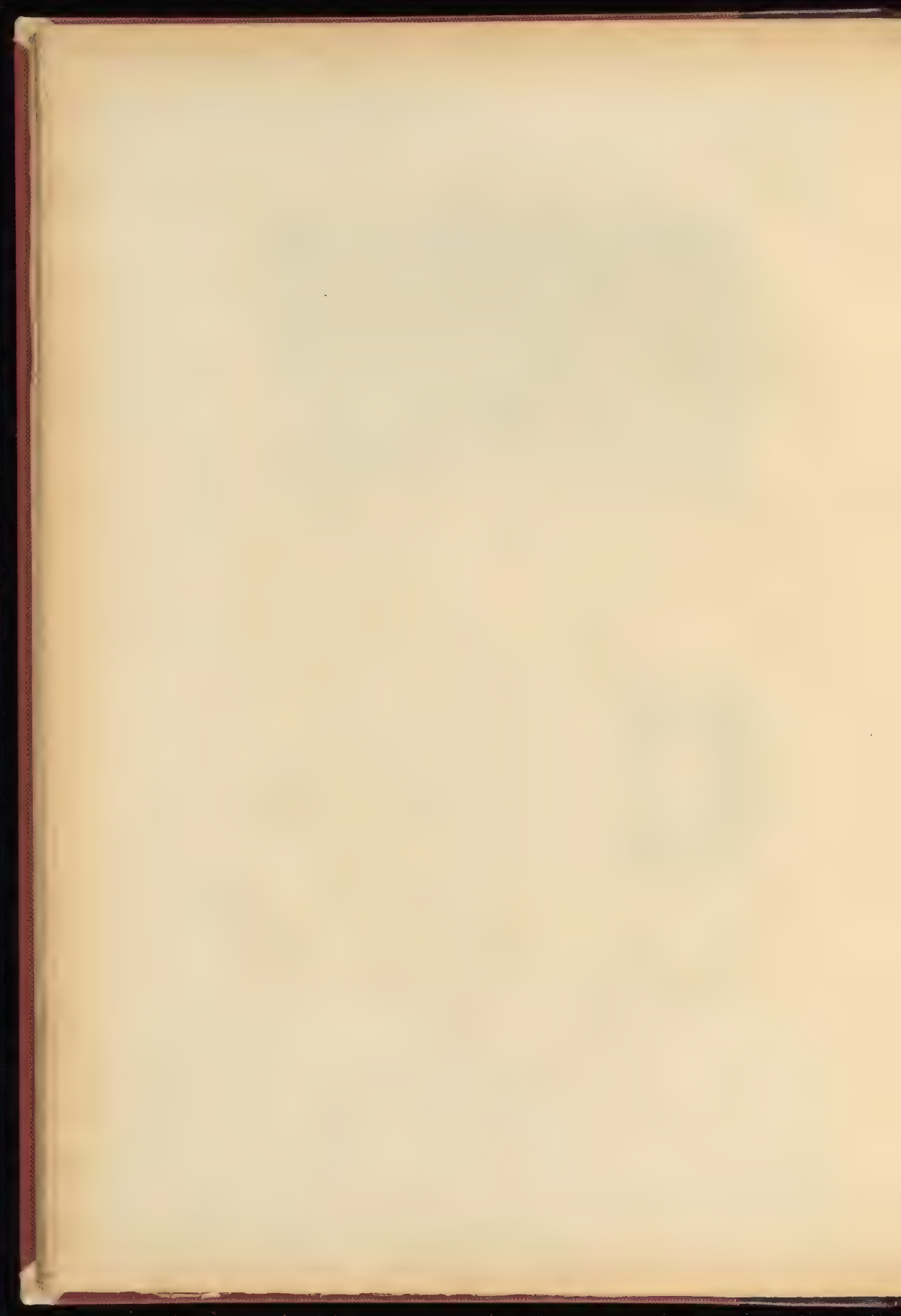




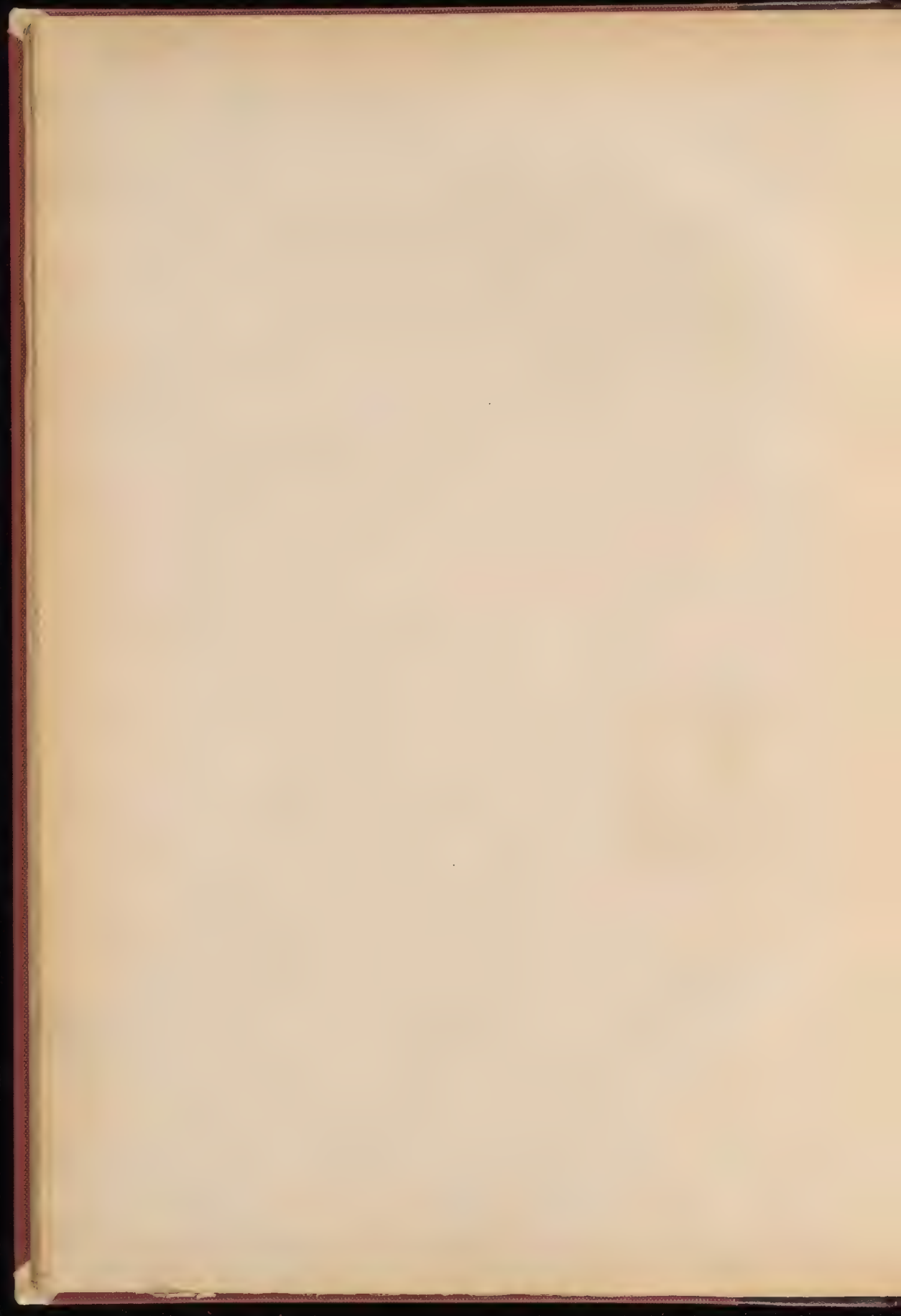
















## GUSTAVE DORÉ



In defiance of the title and the limitations of this book, I cannot make up my mind to look at Doré as a water-color artist merely. It would strike me as odd, and just a little stupid, to cut down so tall an artistic personage to that proportion. You might as well write an essay on Victor Hugo as a rhymers of lines for music, on the faith of the fact that the bard of the "Legend of the Ages" has here and there penned a few verses meant to be sung. Boileau perpetrated a drinking song one day when the Président de Bavière caused him to taste the treasures of his cellar; but it would be foolish to see in Boileau only a predecessor of Nadaud. Napoleon lost a castle to his faithful Las Casas in the contests he waged with him over the chessboard; but it

would come into nobody's head to represent the grand chieftain as a simple chess-player and disciple of Philidor. The present book, for the rest, is no bed of Procrustes on which to trim a giant or stretch a dwarf in order to bring them both to the same measure. Each character should preserve in it his own form and likeness, as surely as Art refuses to let equality queen it in her dominions. Equality is a fine and needful thing when we want to determine our duties or our rights, but it is meaningless when we undertake to measure talents and merits.

In the French water-color Society there are artists who make aquarelle an exclusive business. They have devoted themselves altogether



to this fascinating art, which absorbs their life and their working force. They need nothing for the expression of their ideas but this bright polished language of water-color.

Gustave Doré, on the other hand, is a polyglot. His nature refuses to enter into a specialty. He binds to the service of his genial fancy all methods, all formulæ, and all artistic languages; he only busies himself in choosing the method, or the formula, or the language which will best translate the conception of the moment.

It is thus that we have seen him attack successively, or all at once, every artistic implement, whether the pencil or paintbrush, graver, pen-and-ink, or the modelling-tool.

Some people wonder at this versatility. It troubles their understanding to see an artist claiming the grand rights of the artist, and esteeming that matter is made to be tamed by mind. Instead of seeing him governing his wide domain, they would fain find him narrowed in

a little registered enclosure, as wide as the bit of garden of a hospital veteran. We like to classify the men of our time; we like to number them, and attach tickets to them; this weakness we carry to the minutest degree. The classification by generæ is not enough. We have invented subdivisions. — You are a painter, Sir? Very well. But what sort of a painter are you? Are you a historical painter? Do you do landscape, marines? Answer; we are waiting to class you. An artist chooses his style. Quite right. But what style have you adopted? Do you paint interiors exclusively? Yes. That is firstrate; but we have not quite got you yet. Which interiors do you occupy? Is it the city drawing-room, or the Brittany farmhouse, or the Spanish posada, or the curé's dining-room? Reflect carefully before you announce your choice, for when you are once distributed, ticketed, and catalogued, you must not dream of getting out of your little cabin. You are a beetle tacked with a pin to the cork of your box. When you feel your wings, do not open them, for the love of heaven and of yourself. Never leave the ranks; it is insubordination. You would be punished as quick as you did so, by the abandonment of the market and the denial of dealers. You would pass for a disturber who scatters discord abroad, who confuses received opinions and scorns registration. This system is needful for the security of our ideas and for your own advantage. Paint us ten years of priests smelling cups of coffee, and your fortune will be made; for people will get to know that you keep the article, and your studio will have the custom of all who like to laugh at the spectacle of greedy ecclesiastics. When a picture-merchant is asked for a priest at his dessert, he will know that he can find his priest sticking to your easel. The public, loving



the fine arts, will know he is there too. It will no longer have to explore for your signature at the corners of the pictures you will send to the exhibition; it will only have to see the greasy phiz of a priest, healthy and purple with doing its digestion, and it will announce that it is your priest. And then, if by any chance any other shameless painter should be so lost as to tread on your ground, to touch your trade-mark, to make a priest smelling Mocha, he would be punished, for they will think it is your priest; for if he is not yours he ought to be.

And there, Sir, is society properly regulated. Every one to his little box.

Figaro's judge, Brid'oison, was a mere formalist. We have become methodists. Even in Chinese customs there is progress.

I have but one astonishment left, and this is that in spite of such a ticketing beyond all reason, this regulating which concentrates on the smallest of aims the efforts and genius and profession of every one, our painters and sculptors should still have the form of artists. This seems to prove that art has enough life among us to support any number of trials. But how long is it going to resist this dessicating and dwarfing regimen, which strangles genius, clips everybody's wings, and shuts up souls in little drawers? Already cheapness is manifest in the imaginations of the painters. The breadth of aspiration is becoming





etiolated. Nobody dares to think largely any more. Luck is to the little canvases, the little conceptions, of the little men.

Gustave Doré is all that is infidel to this fatal little system. He alone represents to-day the contrary theory and practice. He alone bursts out of the bondage of classification, and the despotism of the picture-merchant, who dogs you to copy ten times over the same picture,



and all the slavish discipline of our thin sects, and pursy dinner-tables. He takes his own way, distinctly, frankly. And since his kind of being and way of proceeding is the involuntary, but striking, rebuke of what is going on around us,



they have given him over to himself. The artists are shy of this disturber, who makes the mistake of putting the others in the wrong. Never is the name of Gustave Doré seen figuring in a jury. The Academy pretends not to know of Doré. This has the happy effect of leaving his glory undisturbed and his genius untarnished. The great artist patiently travels the road of his choice, in which the public, loving and feeling his works, forms his escort.

I admire and I love this strong and honest solitary, who brings to my mind the high virtue of the ancient masters in a time of degeneracy. Thus acted Michael Angelo, the man of seven souls, who conquered with his powerful artist's will seven arts at once; Michael Angelo, poet, sculptor, architect, draughtsman, painter, engineer and general.

Gustave Doré does not admit that the expression of an artist's thought shall be continually in captivity to the monotony of a single method. According to the color and form of his vision, he chooses to deliver it in the material medium which suits it best.

An admirable illustrator, he has made use of the pencil or the pen to balladize the popular legends, to illuminate the poetic chronicles of the Bible, to translate the laugh of Rabelais, the phantasmagory of

Cervantes, or the high dream of Dante. His book of "Holy Russia" is a satiric masterpiece. The series of the "Labour of Hercules" is an extraordinary caricature. It will soon be ten years since he began his accompaniment to the text of Shakespeare, and as for the pages which he is preparing for this undertaking, they will be his imperishable monument.

Is it worth while to recall everything he has done in black-and-white, and his fine etchings?

Painting in oil serves him to express the loftiest epics, whether divine or human, and the sublime spectacles of nature. He is a *religious decorator*. He might have been summoned to execute and sign, he alone, the whole frescoing of some mighty cathedral. But the commissions for this kind of art always prefer to make a harlequin's suit over their walls, with twenty paintings different in execution and kind, which make discords when brought before each other. Doré has none the less recorded



his name in a masterly manner. The "Dream of Calpurnia," the "Judgment of the Gods," the "Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem," the "Bearing of the Cross," the "Martyrs," the "Neophyte," and the "Valley of Misery," which he has but now finished, constitute an admirable group. It is my fancy to comprehend with these subjects his landscapes, for here God is closely mixed with Nature. Our painter, in fact, is the man of mountaintops mingled with the skies. The mountain is the theme which he treats lovingly, and which he varies incessantly. Scotland with

its lakes lifted into the clouds, the Alps with their haughty outlines, are his chosen models. He has them in his grasp, down to their foundations. To paint them more accurately, with the poetry of their lines and the ruggedness of their details, he has created a manner which belongs to nobody but himself, and which is the very manner of that sort of landscape.

As a sculptor he uses the modelling-tool to give life to elevated thoughts. "Love Assisting Fate," "Glory" — cruel mistress, stabbing



with one hand him whom she caresses with the other,—the “Child-God,” smiling on the breast of his mother and taking the attitude of the crucifix in his play, the “Defence of Paris,” etc., etc. Then the temptation seizes him to put new life into the forms of common things; he composes a mirror-frame out of a bevy of loves lifting a drapery; a candelabra of which Night forms the principal theme, in the blue flare of the gas; and an exquisite clock. Going higher always, he creates the “Vase of the Vine,” of which the bronze was seen in the Salon of 1882, — a charming poem and an incomparable decorative monument.

An excellent musician, an author on occasion, a ceramist may-be, a pastel-painter probably, a glass-stainer if to-morrow the fancy which shall take birth in his heart and his brain demands the brightness and the starkness of window-painting, Gustave Doré is a water-color artist too, because he has need of this brilliant form to realize certain of his conceptions.



His promptness of method, his sureness of hand, the freedom of his touch, his quick decision, and the à-propos of his handiwork, have been powerfully serviceable to him in his labours in water-color.

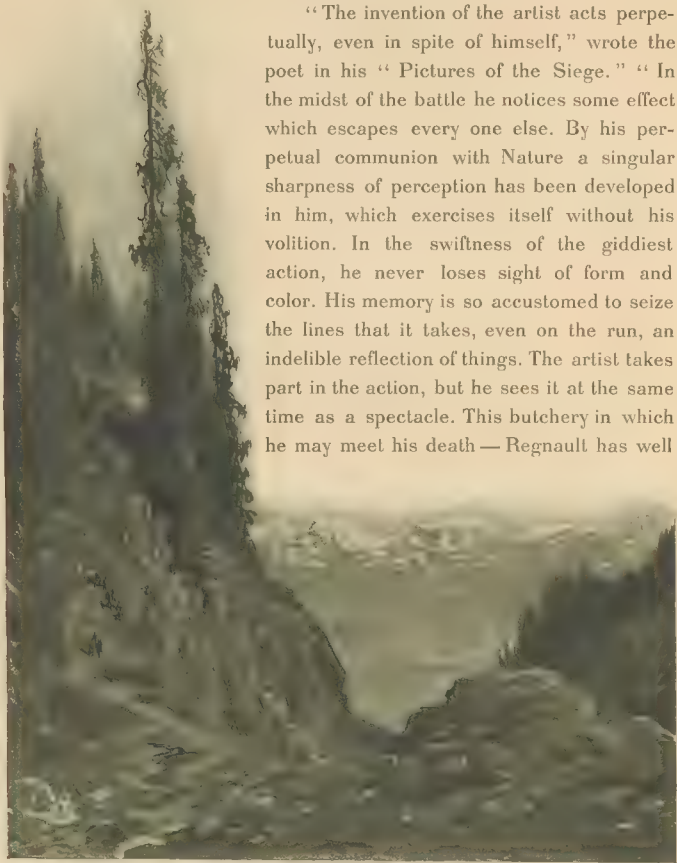
It was in 1877, at the Exposition of the Union Artistique, on the place Vendôme, that Gustave Doré exhibited his water-color paintings for the first time. I recollect, among others, a “Gargantua,” in his cradle, putting cows into his mouth in the style of playthings. I remember also some views of Scotland well worthy of being kept in memory. There was especially a little village scattering itself down the incline of a hill to the sea, which still keeps a lively impression in my mind.

I have remarked that it was in 1877 that Doré had displayed water-colors for the first time in an exhibition. But that date was long after he had taken his degree of master in the art.

He practised water-color for his own pleasure, considering it as a

running hand-writing in which to take his notes. It was thus that, during the siege of Paris, he made a very important series of aquarelles and monochrome paintings, on the ramparts, in the military circle of defence, or in the streets. The public only knows them by the enthusiastic descriptions which they inspired in Théophile Gautier.

"The invention of the artist acts perpetually, even in spite of himself," wrote the poet in his "Pictures of the Siege." "In the midst of the battle he notices some effect which escapes every one else. By his perpetual communion with Nature a singular sharpness of perception has been developed in him, which exercises itself without his volition. In the swiftness of the giddiest action, he never loses sight of form and color. His memory is so accustomed to seize the lines that it takes, even on the run, an indelible reflection of things. The artist takes part in the action, but he sees it at the same time as a spectacle. This butchery in which he may meet his death — Regnault has well









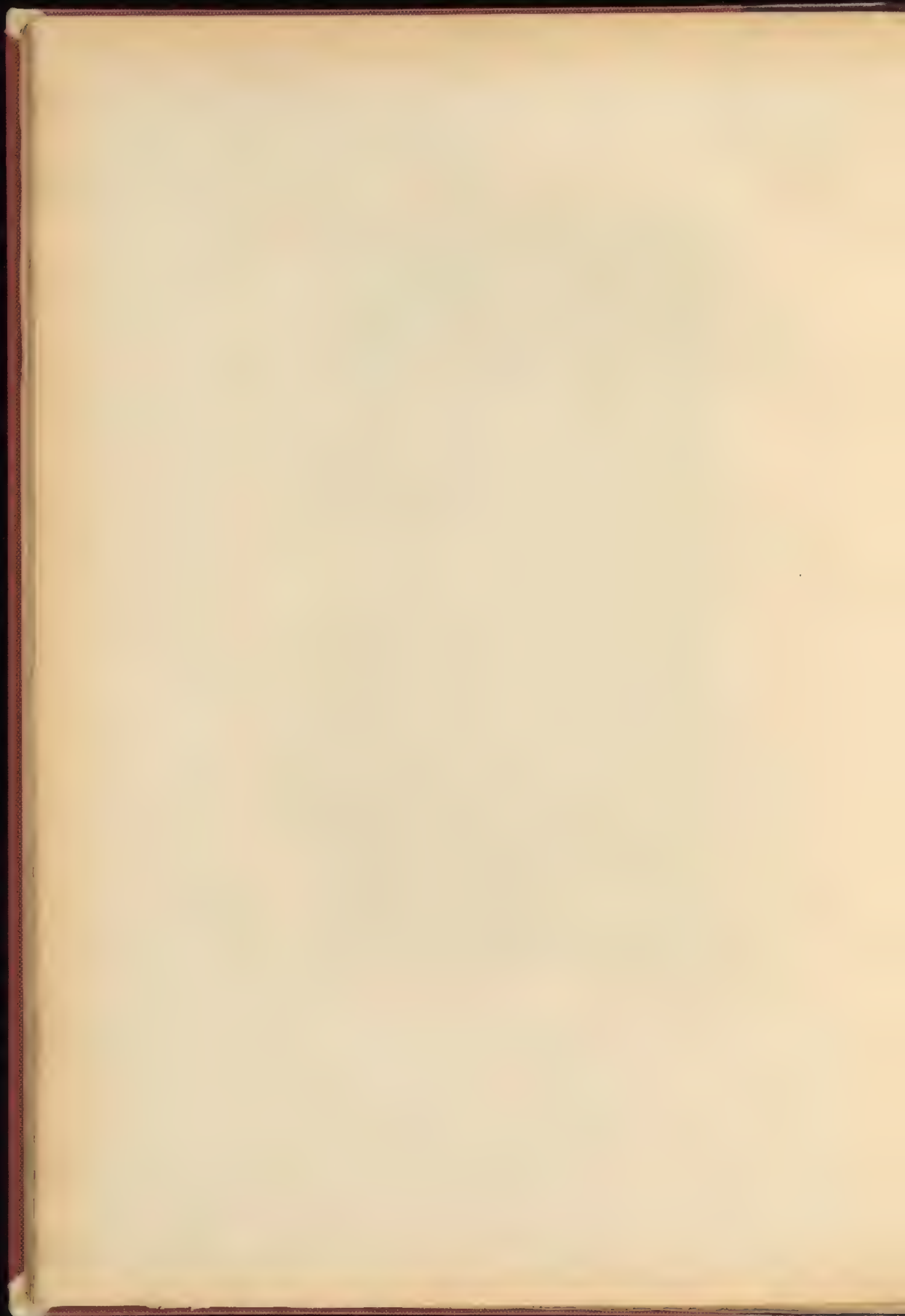




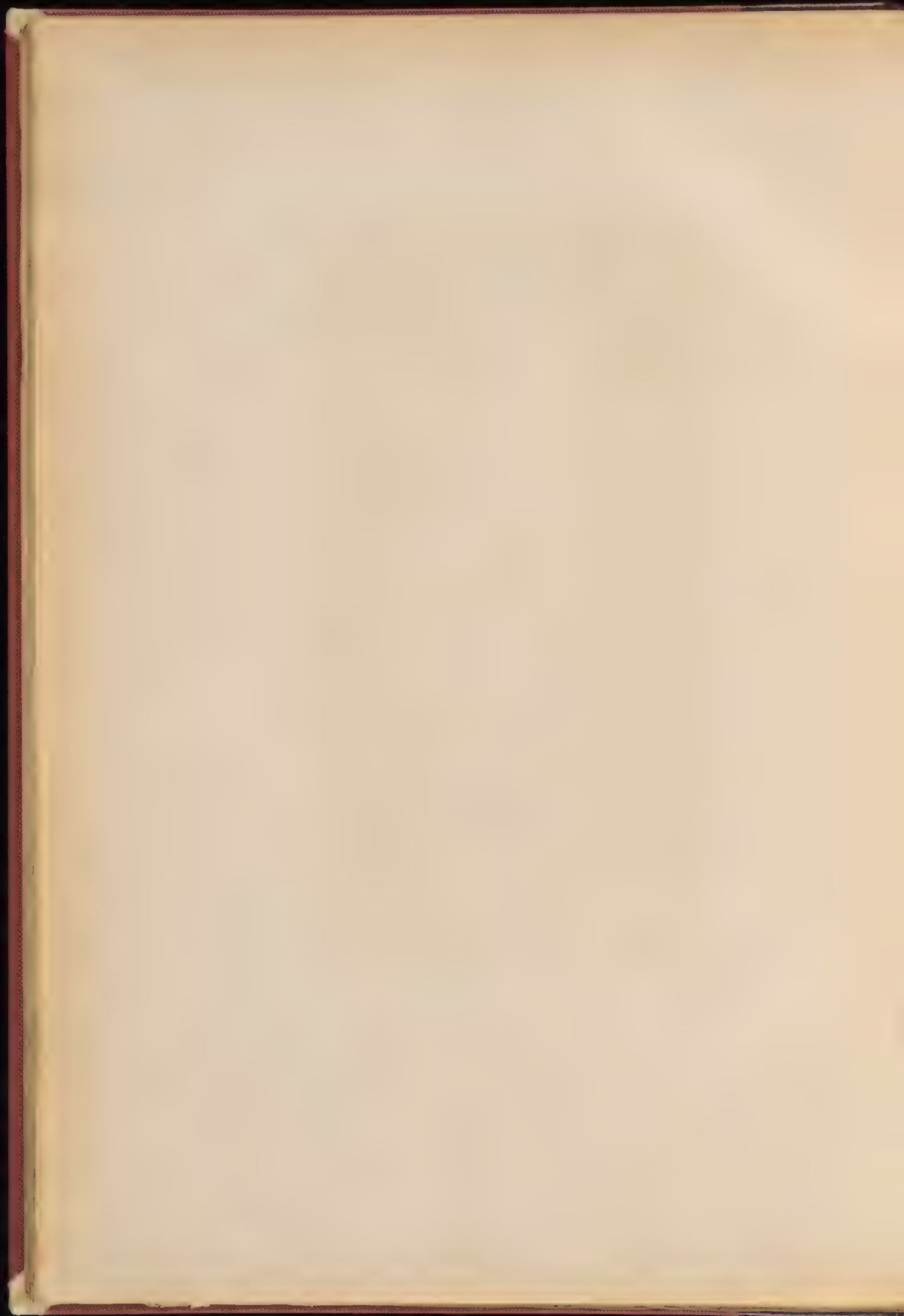


















proved it — is a battle no doubt, but it is also a picture." These are the pictures of the siege which Doré chronicled now in water-color, now in black-and-white. Among the finest should be cited the Bois de Boulogne, the poor fashionable Bois, invaded by a prodigious agglomeration of cattle; a panorama of Paris seen like a gulf, from the plateau of the hill of Montmartre; the collecting of the wounded in the streets bombarded; the household movings of poor people fleeing from the threatened quarters; the coming in of the ambulance.

It was not only the picturesque and accidental side of the siege that Gustave Doré chose to reproduce. He designed the works of defense, the construction of the forts, the armament of the bastions in such-wise as to satisfy both engineers and artists. He has written a history of the siege, both complete and striking.



As Theophile Gautier remarks once more, Gustave Doré proves by this series of studies, sketches and compositions, at a moment when thought seemed stilled by the blow of a single anxiety, that art was irrepressible and that no force had the capacity to restrain its expansion. Under the crash of edifices, of institutions, between the blocks of stone crumbled by bullets or blackened by fire, an evergreen plant appeared promptly, expanding its lustrous flower — Art, immortal as Nature.

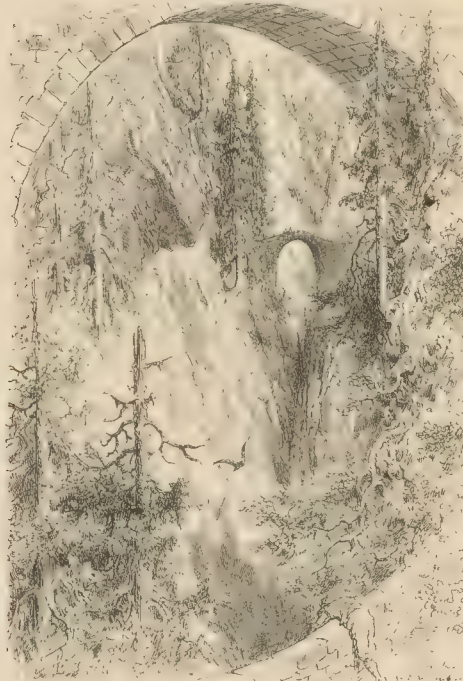
The annual exhibitions at the Palace of Industry having become wearisome on account of the too large number of works presented and accepted, and a taste for the arts seeming to grow up in the public between 1873 and 1878, certain clever merchants and certain clubs of distinction conceived the idea of opening select private exhibitions, more available in their nature for the examination of the objects than the grand throng of the Salon. A hearty greeting was extended to this innovation, and set the exhibitions in fashion.

It was then that the Society of Aquarellists was formed, which held its first exhibition in 1878, in a gallery of the rue Laffitte.

Doré participated. The enterprise would otherwise have been incomplete.

I have already described his contributions in another work.

Not yielding to the generally received opinion which restricts the applicability of water-color painting to the size of the page of an album, Gustave Doré was determined to prove that the resources of aquarelle were



by no means so narrowly bounded; that this method, or this process, might serve in the creation of works of respectable scale.

It was with this view that he composed and carried out in water-colors a portrait of his mother, in life size, which made a sensation in that exhibition of the rue Laffitte.

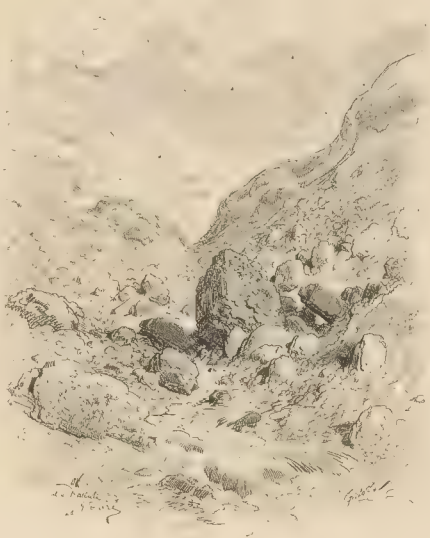
This portrait is of an intense truthfulness. These are strictly the features and expression of visage and the habitual attitude of her whom the grand artist has had the misfortune to lose since then. Those who

have seen her sitting in her arm chair, welcoming her guests with kind words and pleasant smiles, and conversing wittily, will recognise her instantly, as well as those even who have only met her, so identical is the portrait with its model. For those who did not know M<sup>me</sup> Doré the work of her son offers an interest of another kind. Its manipulation, of an unusual exactitude, its force of impression, the decision of touch and the voluntary simplicity of composition, its unusual scale finally, show a

new pathway to the artist, by proving that he can make a specially interesting style out of water-color portraiture.

Gustave Doré has since made two other portraits in water-color painting. One represents a young and charming English lady under a garden tent; the other is a large study from nature representing the good old Françoise, who nursed the children of M<sup>me</sup> Doré.

At the exhibition of the Aquarellists of 1879, Doré again contributed landscapes, scenes gathered from the streets of London, and characters taken from the life. I must point out particularly a head of an Englishman, in a broad hat of white oilcloth. The solidity of the British character, its firmness and its impenetrability, are collected in this visage of a porter in a striking way. Set in contrast with it the other water-color which represents a Norman peasant, of a full and jolly face, extremely fat, with little



wrinkled piercing eyes. What cunning, what cleverness, what tricks, what wit are under this mask of external goodnature! Only imagine a time when these two men find themselves in each other's presence, and dispute over some bargain! The struggle would be none the less Homeric for passing between a porter and a farmer, and it is not I who would wager positively for the success of one or the other of these two temperaments which betray so openly the differentiation of types in two nations bordering on the Channel.

If I were to ramble on according to my fancy I should describe,



one by one, all the aquarelles which Gustave Doré caused to figure at the successive exhibitions of the water-color painters; his fine landscapes of 1880; his fairies, swinging so gracefully on the low branches of the



trees over mysterious lakes, which glittered in the 1881 exhibition; and his superb contributions of 1882, comprising a "Miracle-Court," turbulent, delirious, variegated, and supremely picturesque; a fine portrait; landscapes — among them a bare Spanish moor; and the seashell subject.

This last cartoon, the only one shown to the public, forms part of a series. The painter, who feels for Shakespeare a very comprehensible passion,

has chosen, for an exception, to select this time in his gigantic work the infinitely little things of the Shakespearian fairyland. On a beach of pale sand, where the heavy paws of Caliban follow the delicate prints of Miranda, we see the shells, with their elegant volutes, shining against the blue sky in the brilliancy of their pearly recesses. Out of this Lilliputian palace, with its rich colors, swarm the genii of the "Tempest."

In a second water-color, Gustave Doré has brought upon the stage the ground of a great forest, with its miniature vegetation, its lace-like mosses, and its delicate herbage, constituting another forest on the level of the soil, in which the gnomes and dwarfs and fays of the kingdom of Queen Titania, with the whole gracious world of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, live again and flutter in the familiarity of nature.

In the same time with the "Tempest," Gustave Doré hung on the wall of the gallery in the rue de Sèze an aquarelle which formed with the preceding the most surprising contrast. It is a street by one of the London Docks; a narrow street, bordered by the immense storehouses



of the greatest commercial mart in the world. An intense animation reigns there; loaded drays pass over the pavement, while above them dance bales of wool and cotton, hoisted by pulleys to the upper stories of the warehouse. On protruding scaffold-boards, which form balconies for the highest windows, porters await the bales to roll them into their destined places. Their dark outlines, half-seen in a mist against the gray sky etched by the masts of the shipping, have something majestic about them. We see in them, not only the workmen of the wharves, but a populace, on whom toil has conferred a strange and admirable poetry. With the exhaustless and graceful phantasmagory of the English poet, as sung in the "Tempest," the painter contrasts the intense poetry of commerce, the heroic beauty of the toil of man and the penetrating charm of a reality seen from lofty places and rendered largely.



This is the fashion in which Gustave Doré, whether at the exhibition of the aquarellists, or at the Salon, or in his books, has always the secret of showing himself a great thinker, a philosopher, and a true artist. Whatever be the subject chosen, he carries it aloft,

all the while finishing it out with a just sentiment.

It is in this that he is a superior artist, as well as a marvellous executant.



It has been my privilege often to see him working. I have been able to detect all the mastery of his handling. To speak only of water-color, as that is the principal topic of this chapter, I believe that it would be hard to have more boldness ni

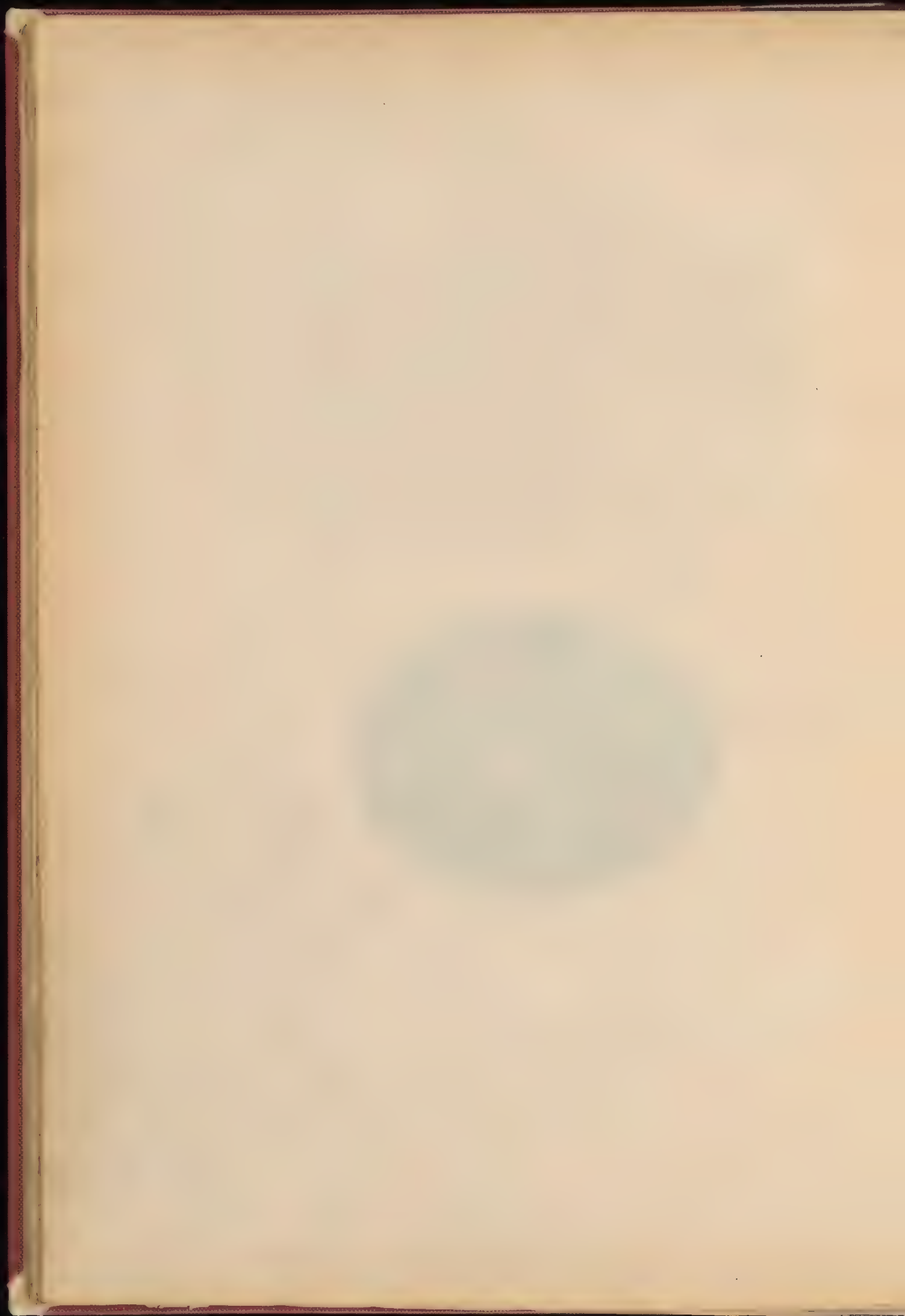
laying in the composition, more precipitancy in washing with the large brushes, or more refinement in pointing details. The artist professes besides a superb and most praiseworthy contempt for tricks; for instance, for body-color, which people push to such abuses now-a-days, and which will end by playing a very evil turn for the aquarellists if they are not on their guard.

Doré thinks quick and works fast; but he is himself the most fastidious critic of his productions. I have seen him forsaking his vast studio in the rue Bayard, where two great owls exported from Scotland, with round eyes are musing about their native mountains, in order to plunge eagerly into the re-commencement of water-colors completely finished. More than six times he did over again on fresh sheets that careless composition of the shells, before he came to satisfy himself. He discarded the finished work, judged by us to be perfect, because he concluded that the over-labored details hurt the effect of the ensemble. He found in it faults which to other eyes than his own would have seemed qualities. And he applied himself again to his task until at last he found the finished expression of his theme and the final balance between detail and effect. — For it is one of the obstinate principles of his soul that a water-color is so much the more beautiful in proportion as it seems more directly produced.

RENÉ DELORME.





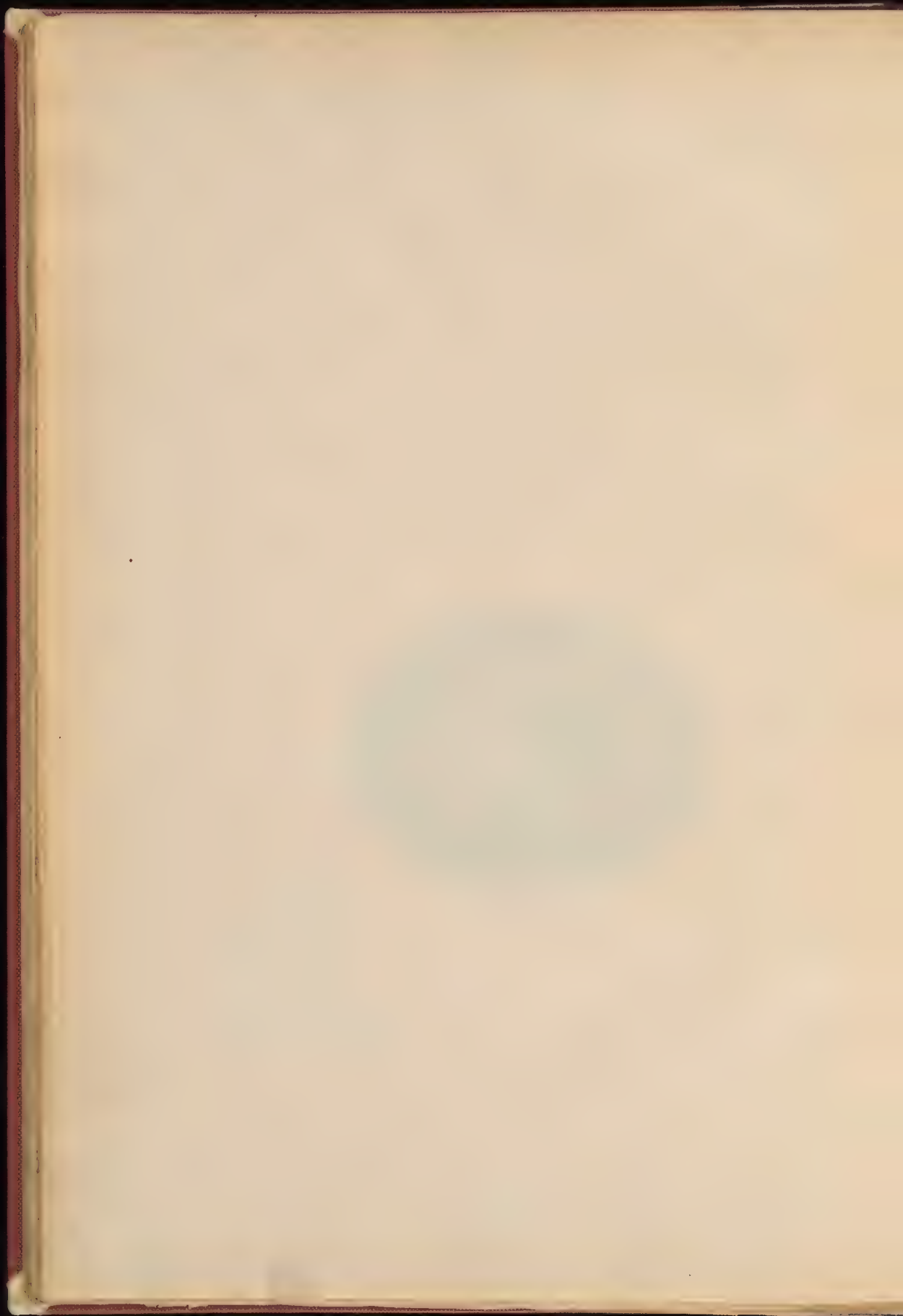












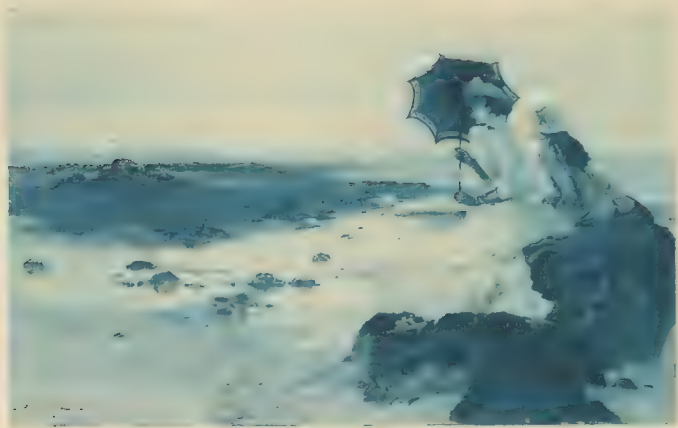












## ERNEST DUEZ



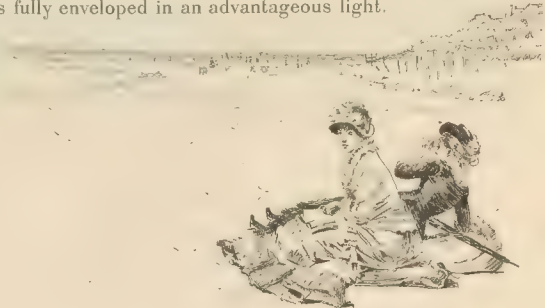
To some of the artists who have lately undertaken to revive among us a taste for water-colors, the reproach might be made of too great skill and a too perfect knowledge, in this delicate and charming art of painting with water, a simple, personal and charming form of expression not admitting of too much method or of complicated subjects, and one that has been perverted by requiring more of it than it can give. It is in this way, for example, that a goodly number among them have fallen from water-colors into miniatures; and under the name of working for the progress and development of a new art, work laboriously at the dry brush, with the patience and dexterity of a Japanese painter or missal maker, painting pigmies on fans.

The artist of whom I am going to speak is happily not of this class. He is a water-colorist in the true sense of the word, one of those who practise most loyally and boldly that theory of the *goutte d'eau* that the English were the first to employ with success. In these water-colors we find that freshness, that delicacy of tones, that tender and transparent coloration which are the charm of their works. It is produced by their method, noting first the tones made by large washes, melting and harmonising in the undulations on the white page; the execution is simple and fresh, the well-filled brush does not tarry over minute details, but does its work quickly; the color is vibrating and warm, the planes are well defined, and the work is fully enveloped in an advantageous light.

Duez' water-colors, like all his pictures, are directly inspired by nature; they are like them, a conscientious and faithful image; they give

an exact view of things and impart an impression of reality.

Of the five or six young artists who take the lead of our modern school of painting, Duez is one of those who seem to be most profoundly imbued by a love and respect for nature. From the time when, having learnt enough to be able to continue his studies alone, he freed himself from his masters, it is towards nature that he has been looking. His only anxiety since then has been to live in constant communication with her, to be only inspired by her, and to endeavor without ceasing to represent the infinite variety and the ever new splendors of her aspects. A spirit of joyful remembrance rises from all his works like a perfume. They please by the good humored spirit in which they are undertaken, the ardor and pleasure in carrying them to a successful end. We can see they were conceived in the intoxication of his visions and the festivity of his soul. Would you be laughed at in the face? Pretend, before this possessor of talent that, the



trade of painter, or dauber as it is termed by the unbelievers, is not the highest of professions. This amateur of nature possesses all the qualities that are necessary for its glorification. He has the exact view of objects: that quick and sure perception of their position and size in space, that determination in the slightest shades of color, and harmony in their union, and what is better than all these, such a delicacy of sight that he can mark with a stroke of his brush, the innumerable degrees in the scale of colors, the numerous shadings, in an almost infallible manner.

Duez occupies himself but little with what is usually termed the subject of a picture. The placing of his work, its arrangement, the agreeableness and charm of its composition are of less importance to him than its execution. He is an epicure of the brush, a connoisseur of the palette, who in art, is of the faultless-sonnet theory; who prefers to an interesting work imperfectly executed, a bit closely studied, drawn faultlessly and irreproachably painted. It follows that in this epoch of artistic mercantilism when each one seeks to create



a speciality, like the nearest chocolate-maker or the smartest chemist, the pictures of Duez belong to no particular genre and cannot be classed in any of the categories in which we are accustomed to group our artists, since it has pleased them to so group themselves.

He is not, properly speaking, a landscape nor a figure painter, neither is he an animal painter, even less an historical painter. Or rather, he is at once all these, having chosen simply to be modern; to closely follow his period and study intently all that is happening. It seems as if he had taken a mischievous pleasure in troubling the repose of the well-known specialists.

We have successively seen him, at his outset, as an historical painter, with a dozen very indifferent pictures, which were executed during his stay

in Pils' atelier; a religious painter with a "Christ" that he exhibited in the Salon of 1868 and that was not without qualities; genre painter with his "Lune de Miel," his "Accouchée," his "Femme aux Pivoines," his interesting picture of this year, "Autour de la Lampe," and twenty other works of a like character; portrait painter with his "Homme à l'Ulster," his "Butin" and "De Neuville;" landscape and marine painter with his fine studies of Villerville, and that excellent picture "Le Soir," that was exhibited in the Salon of 1881.

There are, in this series of various subjects that he has successively touched, some for which Duez has had a decided partiality. These are those that have allowed him, in a single work, to develop the double talent of sea, landscape, and figure painter. Being, as I have already said, a passionate adorer of nature, a pure Parisian, having besides, what is necessary to every good modern painter, a taste for the fashionable elegancies of feminine attire, he delights to conduct together these two difficult subjects: on the one hand the face and draperies of the woman, their prettinesses and grace, on the other to frame them with the solemn beauty of the sea, its solitude and mystery.

And here it is I find my epicure and amateur of a while ago. This adorer of color requires two treats at the same time: Woman and the Sea! What delicacy he bestows in painting them, what tender care! What charming works are these pictures that we have contemplated year after year in the Salon or in private exhibitions! "La Mélancolie," which shows us a young woman pausing, at the corner of the cliff, already overshadowed by the





evening light, and following, with a vague look, the billowy sea, with its glittering crests upon the horizon; and "Villerville," where we see cut out against the pale gold of the strand and the silver gray of sea and sky, two fine silhouettes of "Parisiennes." One, dressed in dark green, leans upon her elbow and follows, opera-glass in hand, the sports of the bathers, that speckle the distant beach. The other holds upon her lap an open book, and with prettily placed finger, seems about to turn the leaf. But it is not of the novel she is thinking! Her eyes are obstinately fixed before her, while she follows some distant memory. She is dressed entirely in gray; some bright red poppies placed in her *directoire* hat alone sound a brilliant flourish, in the somewhat dim harmony of the work. "L'Accouchée:" a corner of a garden, with sky and sea for horizon. A young woman is reclining on a lounge, the paleness of her face struggling with the whiteness of the laces in which she is softly enveloped; her thin and wasted hands, with finely tapered fingers, half lost in the thickness of the ample coverings.



Duez often delights in plays of color. He is, when he wills, one of the ablest and most practised symphonists of the palette. None better understands how to place side by side two similar colors, and show by delicate tones the almost imperceptible shadings.

M. Carolus Duran, who excels in such clever execution, in his children's portraits:—blues upon blues or crimson upon crimson,—does not in any sense surpass him. Any one might have remarked in the last Salon with what astonishing art certain parts of the picture "Autour de la Lampe" were

modeled in the half-tones. The profile and arm of the young girl, the face and hands of the chess-players, were morsels the like of which we are not often accustomed to meet with at the Salon.

That which gives an added charm to Duez' works and increases their value, in the eyes of connoisseurs, is that they are nearly all, on account of the great love and respect in which he holds her, executed directly from Nature. Let me be perfectly understood. By this I do not mean merely that when Duez is painting a picture he always makes use to a model. That is so clearly a duty, that few painters even among the least conscientious, if they are careful

of their reputation and do not wish to risk the chance of their canvases remaining their personal property, attempt to avoid. What I mean to say, is that his pictures that are painted on the beach, Duez does not take up again in the atelier, but contents himself on his return home, with framing and hanging them on the wall without although of retouching them. Thus they preserve



that vigor and freshness of impression, that open air vibration, that penetrating perfume of nature which works finished in the studio, or done later from sketches and studies, lack. The artist himself assured me that "Le Soir," so generally remarked in the Salon of 1881, was painted, finished and signed on the beach of Villerville in a corner where wind and rain raged furiously. It was also in this way that Butin's portrait was done. One should hear Butin, with his hearty voice, give an account of this achievement. Every day, without reference to the weather, torrid heat or tempest, Duez dragged his unfortunate model to the beach. Butin sadly placing himself at his easel, the sitting commenced. Terrible sittings, without repose, during which the unhappy artist's glance was forbidden to wander, even for an instant, from his canvas to watch with a melancholy regard the white sails flit over the distant ocean. All this did not prevent the portrait being finished in fifteen days, Butin being forced to admit that "*c'était un rude morceau.*"



Unfortunate painters have not the means of having a history. Duez not having been very happy at the outset, it follows that the history of his first years can be written in a few lines.

The day Thought awoke with him, vocation awoke with it. From this time it took entire possession. Family exhortations, early mortifications in the struggle, the anxieties and miseries of the life, were unable to overcome this implacable vocation. At the age when



ordinarily all one's efforts are strained to be the victor in games of strength, Duez with great ardor occupied his whole time with drawing. When he was barely ten years old, in the circle of his relations and friends, were passed around hundreds of little sketches that he had made with surprising dexterity. At the school where he was placed he began by sketching all the personnel of the establishment, from the

humble dog in the court, to the superb director, in less time than it took to decline *rosa*, the *rose*.

This ardor for drawing increased with his years. At college he employed alike the time appointed for study and that for recreation to his beloved occupation. One of his professors humorously called him the abbé Trublet of his class; as he drew, drew, drew.... with the same ardor with which the other compiled.

His family, which had planned for him an easy life in some good commercial house, tried in vain to conquer this determined vocation.

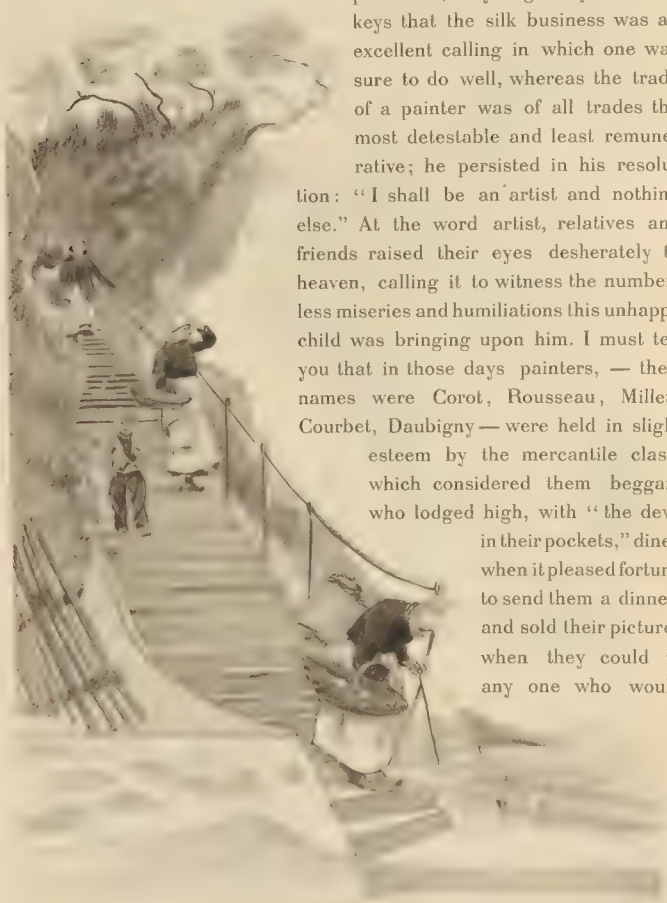
The more they tried, the stronger grew the hold of the vocation; at last, impatient, they decided to abruptly separate this sketcher from his sketches.

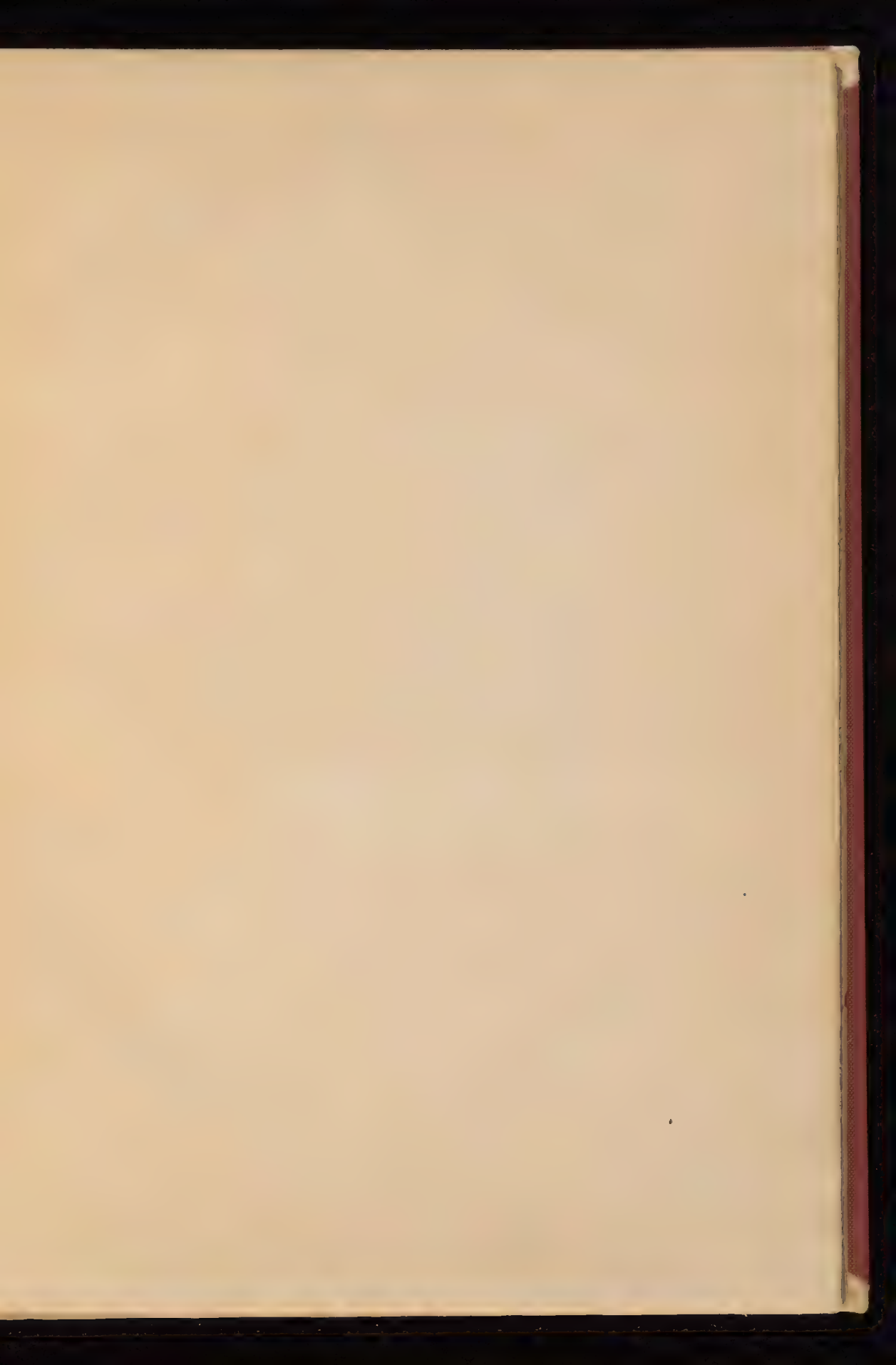
He was taken from school and placed in a silk warehouse. The boy

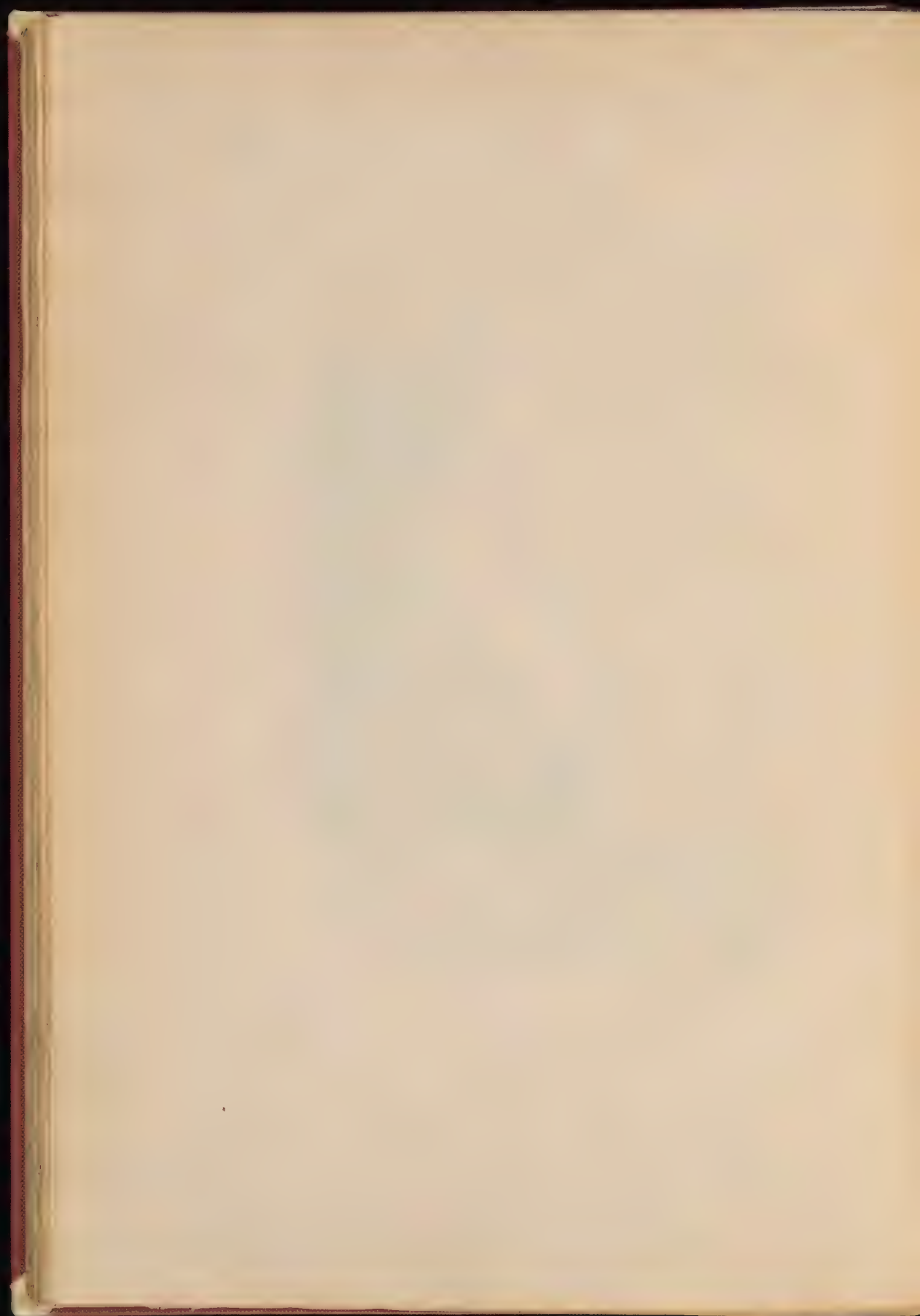
protested; they might repeat in all keys that the silk business was an excellent calling in which one was sure to do well, whereas the trade of a painter was of all trades the most detestable and least remunerative; he persisted in his resolution:

"I shall be an artist and nothing else." At the word artist, relatives and friends raised their eyes desherately to heaven, calling it to witness the numberless miseries and humiliations this unhappy child was bringing upon him. I must tell you that in those days painters, — their names were Corot, Rousseau, Millet, Courbet, Daubigny — were held in slight esteem by the mercantile class, which considered them beggars who lodged high, with "the devil

in their pockets," dined when it pleased fortune to send them a dinner, and sold their pictures when they could to any one who would









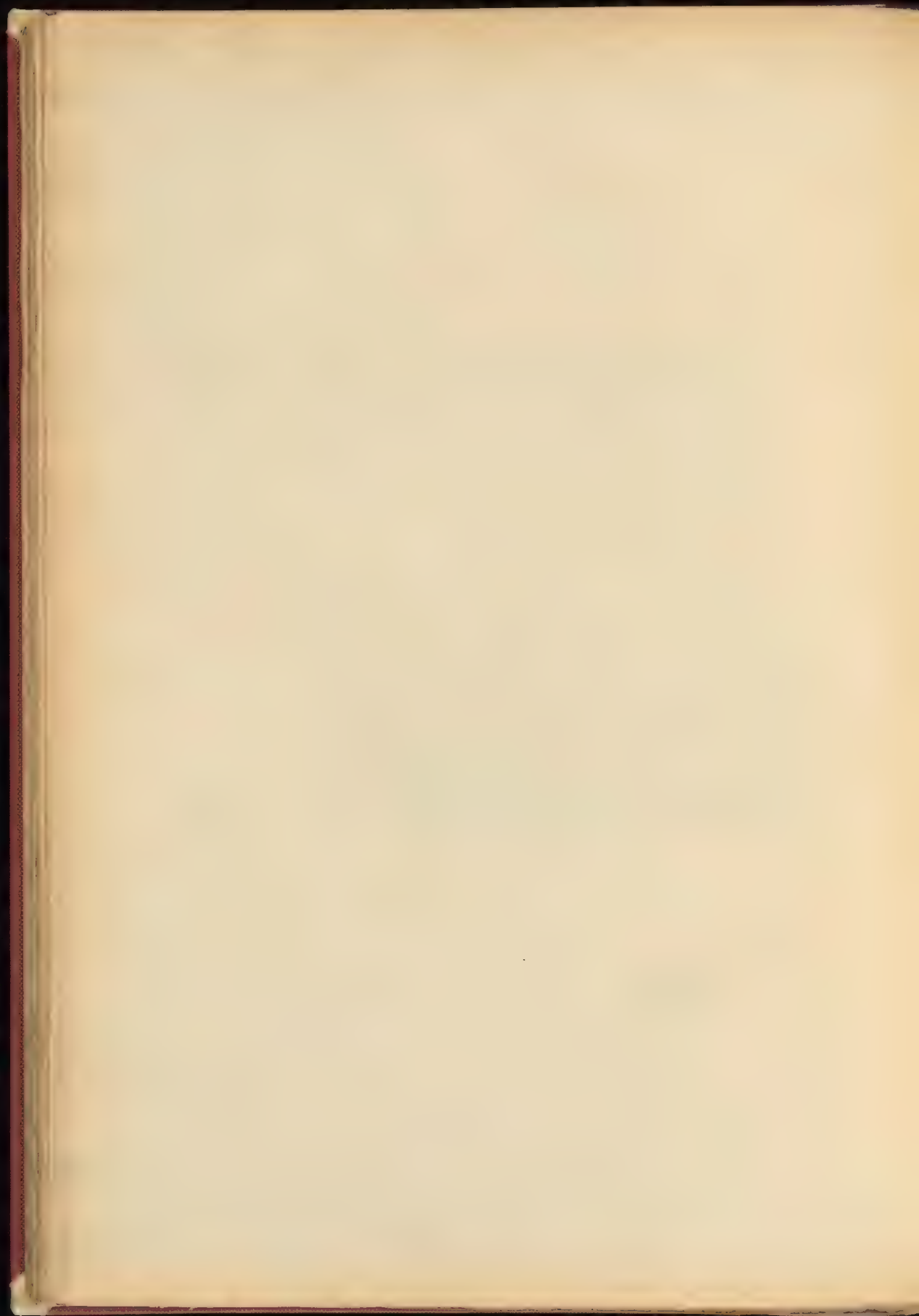




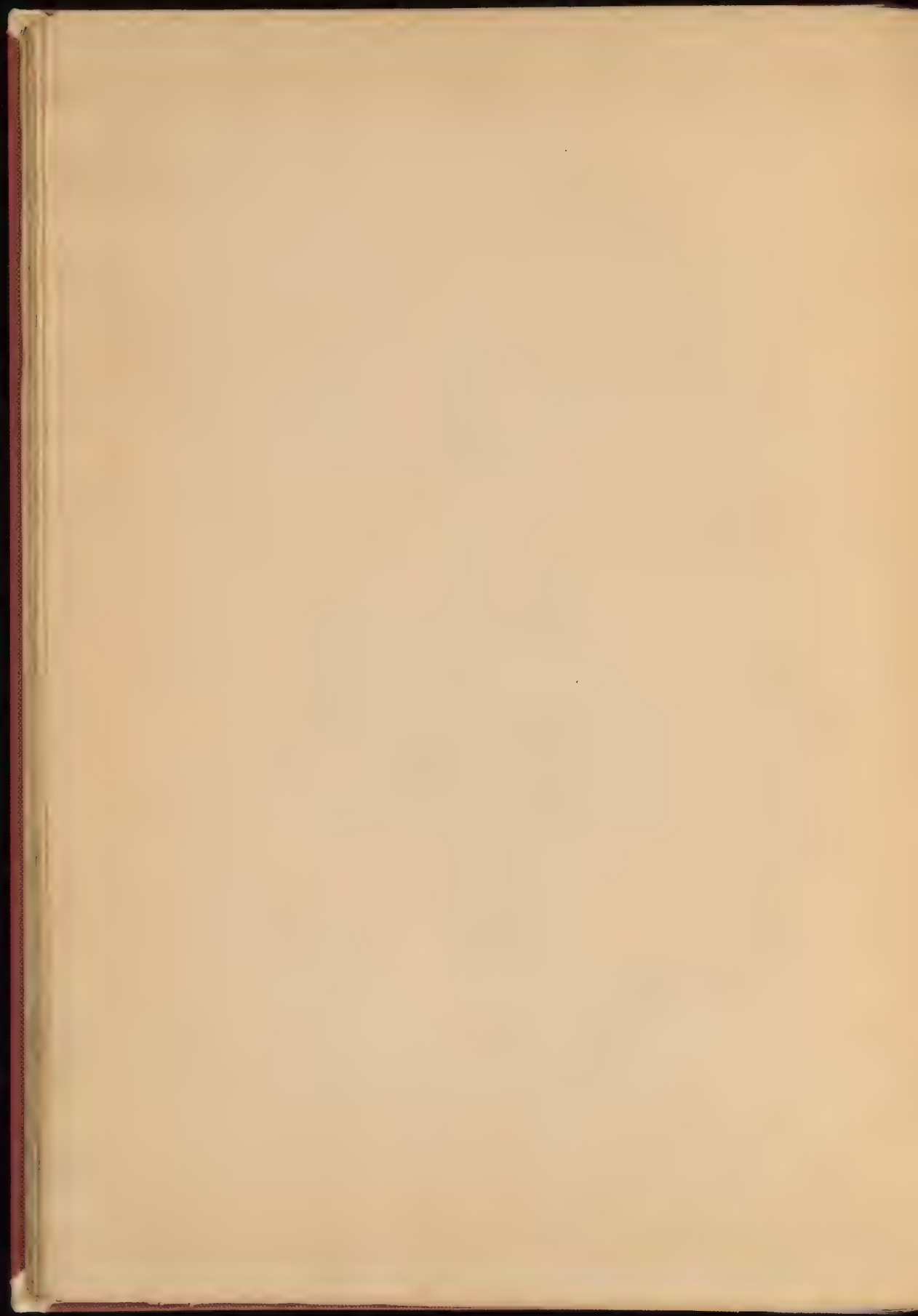






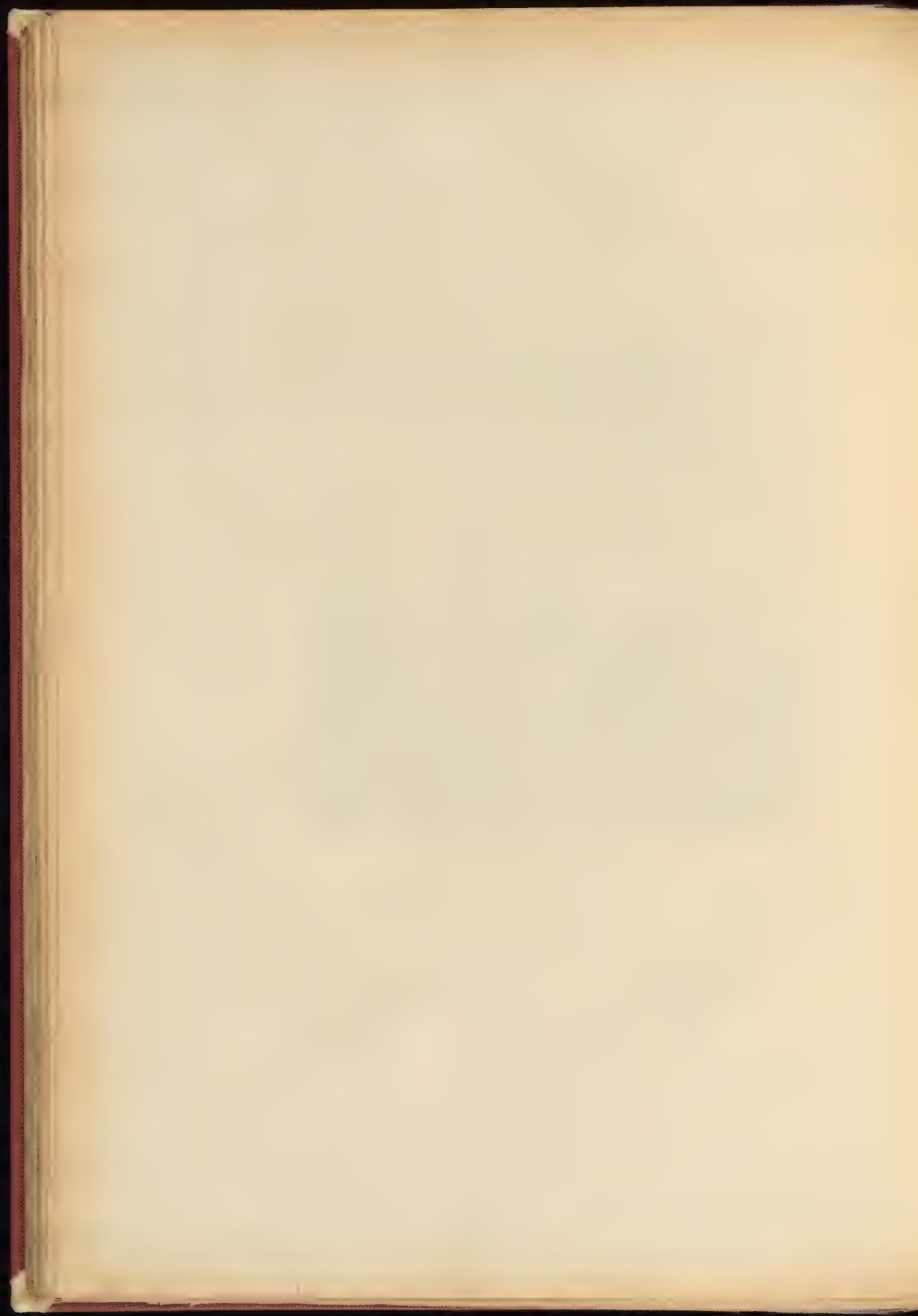












buy them. To-day artists are held in higher favor, and a painter with a balcony on the avenue de Villiers, and, good or bad year, ten thousand *écus* of orders, is a serious *prétendant* who may expect an heiress.

For three years the silk business held Duez ; during these three years his grieved parents could convince themselves that those counters sheltered a clerk who would never do them the least honor. At the end of three years they decided it was useless to continue this humiliating experience, so Duez was left free to follow the course of his bright dreams. He went and inscribed his name on the register of Pils's atelier and became one of the most assiduous pupils.

The first picture that he exhibited was "Christ mort," of which I have incidentally spoken; this work was not remarked, nor were those of the following years. They were mostly costume-pictures in the style in which Roybet, Zamacoïs and others were so successful at that time.

Before 1873 nothing of interest was signaled by Duez. He continued to brush some small historical pictures that connoisseurs and dealers only too rarely sought to buy. It was a time of terrible struggles with life's hazards, a time of hard miseries gaily supported. This year Duez exhibited the "Lune de Miel." The evolution was complete ; no more classic pictures, no more hunting for subjects ; the artist had resolutely engaged in modern art. He, with five or six contemporaries, followed the steps of Edouard Manet to conquer new formulas. He became *tachiste* and *plein-airiste*. His frank nature did not pause between the two schools. With a bound, resolutely, he cleared the space that separated them. He threw off the yoke of formulas and useless traditions. Released from all the obstacles that had held him in the past, the painter's intelligence, only anxious for truth, went direct to nature. At the time his method of painting changed, his style mellowed. The complicated



palette, lately noisy and discordant, became harmonious, clear, simple and mellow. Objects were vigorously attacked, with firm and full touch, enveloped in atmosphere. The correct outlines, but slightly accentuated, were lost in an harmonious whole; the work seemed living and true.

"La Lune de Miel" was not a work to be passed unseen. It raised quite a tumult, and commenced Duez's reputation. The picture he exhibited the following year founded it definitely. It was entitled "Splendeur et Misère," and formed two panels. Upon one of them a young woman with bold form and insolent glance, flaunting a resplendent costume. Upon the other a horrible old hag in rags, exhaling vice and abjection from all the pores of her hideous person.



"Splendeur et Misère" had a resounding success at the Salon of 1874. Two years later Duez exhibited "La Femme aux Pivoines," a charming canvas, where he revealed more fully than in the preceding ones his fine and delicate talent of colorist, and the "Jeune Homme à l'Ulster," a solidly executed portrait.

No picture of Duez figured at the Salon of 1875. This was a dark year for the artist. An eye disease kept him a prisoner in his room for five months. For a time it was feared he would become blind. Fortunately these fears were unfounded; at the end of five months, I leave you to imagine with what joy, he recommenced painting.

In 1877 Duez exhibited his wife's portrait, and a charming genre picture, "Fin d'Octobre." A family group upon the terrace at Villerville, the day is nearly ended and the season is over. A lady sits listlessly looking off towards the sea, or perhaps, is looking backward in memory to the past happy summer days. Scarcely a breath stirs the draperies, the sea is calm, dotted here and there by tiny sail boats, and off on the horizon is a long line of smoke from an almost invisible steamer. A perfect day in the summer of

Saint Martin. There is a peculiar sentiment in the picture which almost proclaims the title, the listless mother with her hands lying idle with a book in her lap, the elder child leaning upon the railing, looking out to sea, deserted by her playmates, who have all returned to their city homes, while the baby left alone totters among the chairs holding to them for support, and over all the soft atmosphere of the end of October. All this Duez has expressed to the attentive observer. The following year he sent "Les moulrières de Villerville" and "l'Accouchée;" of this exquisite work I have already spoken.

This rapid enumeration of the canvases by which in the different exhibitions we have become acquainted with Duez brings us to speak at this date of the most important work that he has yet undertaken, and which remains thus far his principal canvas. I refer to his "Saint Cuthbert." Why has the artist related the legend of this holy man? I do not know. It remains that in the course of his evangelical journeys Cuthbert one day lost himself on the cliffs that overlook Villerville; he begged the Lord to send him the means to satisfy his hunger. The Lord did not keep him long praying, but sent to saint Cuthbert an eagle, holding a fish in its talons. The legend does not explain how the bishop managed to cook the fish — the important thing being that the miracle was accomplished. The picture is divided into three panels, the central one containing the principal subject, and the other two, forming the sides of the tryptich, representing scenes from the saint's life.

Upon the central panel saint Cuthbert with his mitre on his head, invested with his chasuble, and holding his crosier in his hand, extends his arm towards the eagle which flies to meet him. At his side a young





boy, who accompanies him, kneels with both arms stretched out in a gesture of profound stupefaction. On the right panel saint Cuthbert is seen as a child, in prayer, and on the left, saint Cuthbert old, conversing, with the birds of the air.

The work has the ingenuousness and simplicity that suit the telling of a legend, but it is less interesting by its subject than by its execution.

The figure of the bishop with extended hand, and straight stiff hanging chasuble lengthening out his figure, the ground, and the sea, are painted with an intensity of truth, a respect of the thing seen, rarely attained even by this true portrait-painter of nature.



Duez exhibited, in 1880, the portrait of "Ulysse Butin." This picture opened a series of portraits that Duez proposes to exhibit each year. He intends to create a gallery of painters in the exercise of their artistic profession. To the portrait of "Butin" has succeeded that of "Alphonse de Neuville", and we are assured that we shall see in this year's Salon that of Madame "Madeleine Lemaire". In 1881, "Alphonse

de Neuville" and the "Soir". In 1882, "Autour de la Lampe". In the principal figure, a young man leaning his head upon his hand as he reads, we easily recognise the portrait of the late regretted painter Maurice Poirson. This picture closes the list of Duez's important works up to this time.

For the water-colors that have been successively exposed, rue Lafitte and rue de Sèze, it would be trifling to cite them all. They are for the most part fine and strong studies of landscape, executed with a rich and powerful facility, quickly done and largely treated. All the artist's qualities are easily recognised. The same flexibility in execution, the same



sincerity, refinement and that something more of delicate tenderness that is given in water-colors.

Like the history of all men whose life has been one of perpetual labor, a race without rest after a little fame and fortune, the history of Duez is contained in the recital of his works. We seek vainly in this artistic existence, already so well filled, any story of adventure or anecdotes. Duez has never travelled. He does not write for the newspapers. He does not lecture, neither does he occupy himself with politics. He does not recite poetry nor touch the guitar. He is sober and discreet. He lives at number forty in the rue Fortuny, in the



charming artistic home where his life up to the present has quietly been divided between family joys and the day's work. He leaves it soon to enter into possession of the handsome house he has built on the boulevard Berthier.

This boulevard which was only a short time ago a vast, uninhabited plain is now lined with handsome studios, facing the fortifications, that do not obstruct the light and air from these artistic residences. And they strongly remind one of the artistic homes of Cheyne Walk in Chelsea, London.

His atelier, situated above his apartment, is vast, light and well arranged, hung with tapestries and furnished in dark red satin. Rare bibelots and beautiful pieces of stuffs lie carelessly on the tables and furniture. Pictures and photographs on the walls; water-colors signed by the regretted Jacquemart; Duez's portrait by Mathey; a fine proof of de

Neuville's "Bourget," another of Manet's "Canotiers" and Delort's "Embarquement de Manon Lescaut." In a recess of the studio hangs the "Lune de Miel." The painter's easel occupies the centre of the studio. Before it we may find him all day, working from his models, always smiling and *bon enfant*.

Duez, as soon as the Salon is closed, establishes himself at Villerville in his father-in-law's handsome property. Here he has built upon the beach an immense studio opening on the cliffs and the sea. This is where "Saint-Cuthbert" was painted. If in July and August you should be wandering in this vicinity and should meet a superb fellow with regular features, open countenance, sauntering on the beach at low tide, with an indolent air, eyes half closed, water-color box in hand, do not hesitate to recognise him, it is Ernest Duez.

GUSTAVE GETSCHY





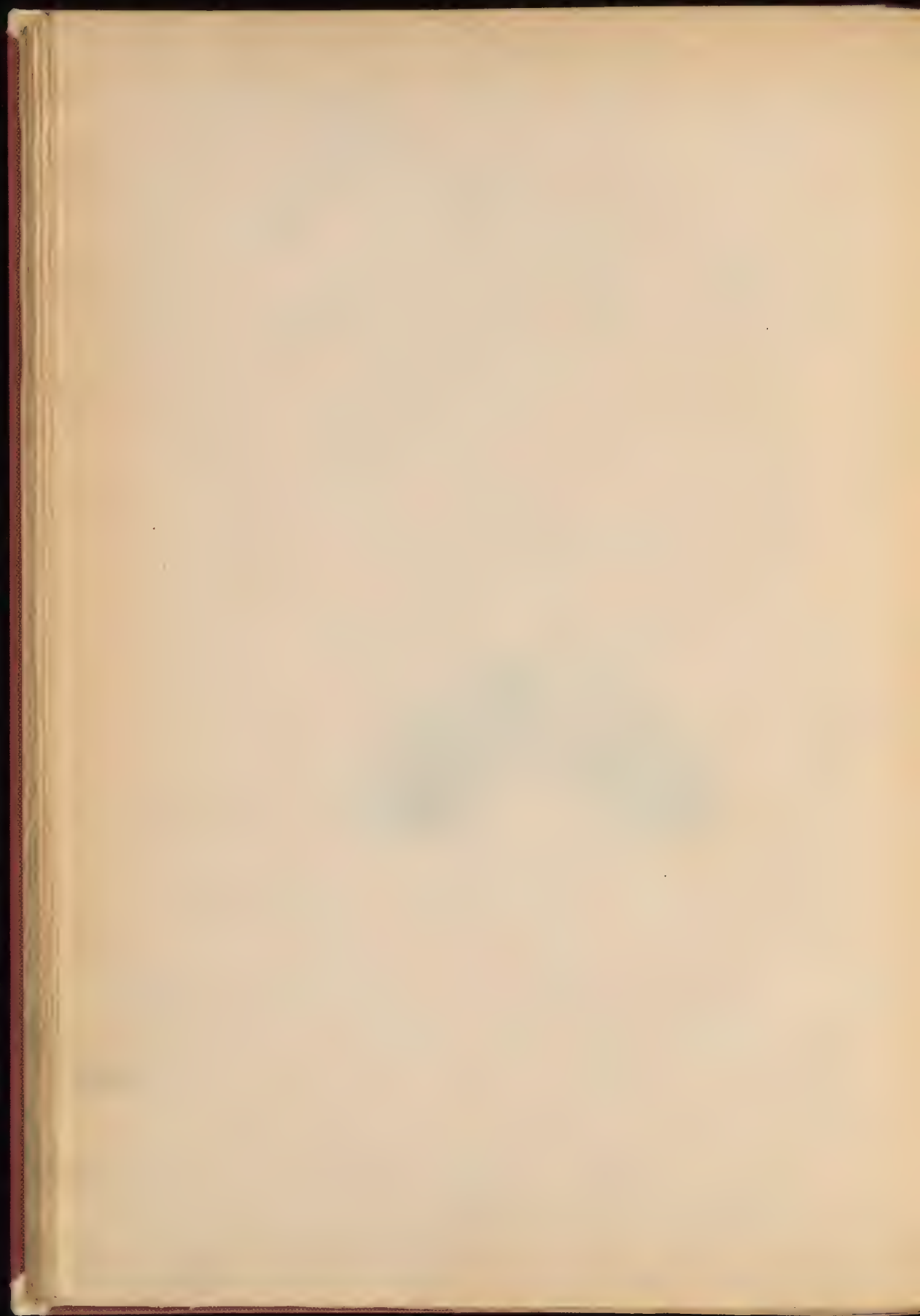




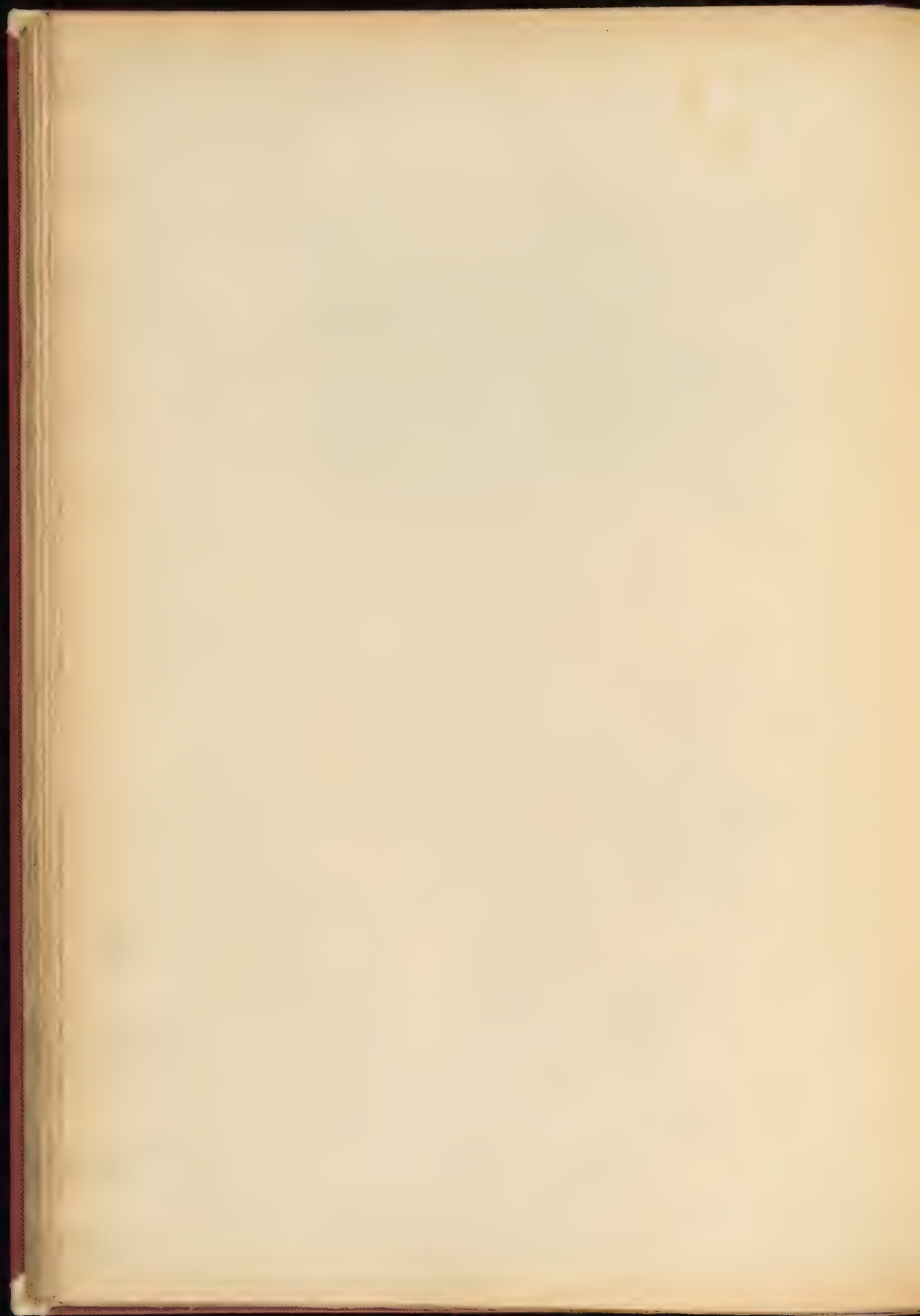




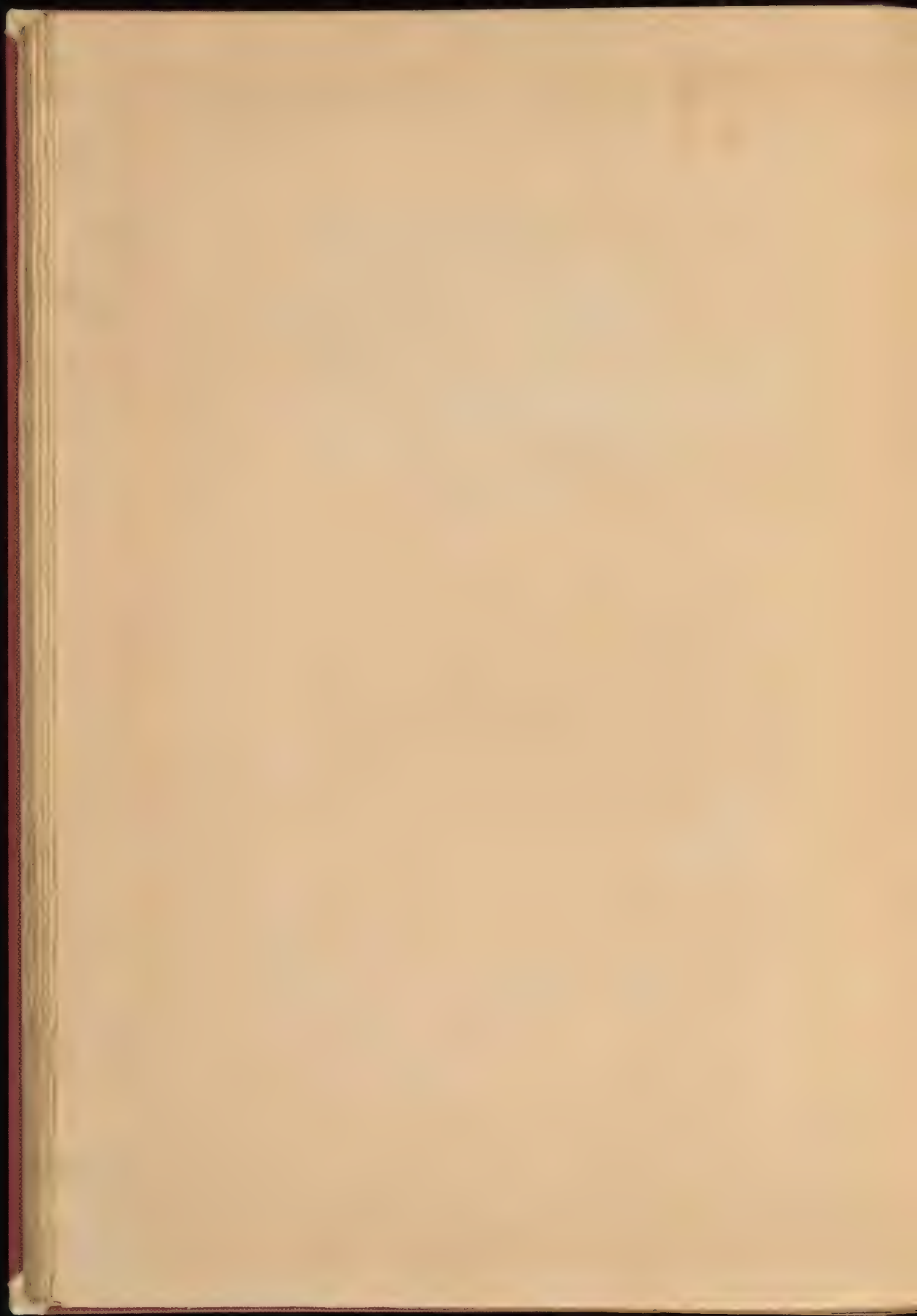
















## LOUIS FRANÇAIS



Louis-François Français was born in 1814, at Plombières, in the Department of the Vosges. His childhood offers no remarkable circumstance, and nothing in his early years could afford evidence of the great artist who now does honor to the French school. A special aptitude which he seemed to have for mathematics at first directed his studies towards the exact sciences, but he was obliged to interrupt his lessons before obtaining his ends in this direction, and we find him arriving at Paris at the age of fifteen years, to take up a situation as clerk in a book-store.

He had been in the habit of drawing a little from infancy, but it was from the beginning of his residence in Paris that the taste for art

really developed itself in him. He worked at art with incredible perseverance during the rare moments when a little time could be spared



from the humble occupation by which he made his living, with no higher ambition than that of arriving some day at the illustration of books with vignettes on wood. In fact, by making use of the acquaintances he formed at the bookseller's, he succeeded in placing some designs which attracted attention, in the luxurious illustrated

editions of famous authors. Finally, at the end of five or six years, he thought he was in a state to be capable of giving satisfaction to a growing circle of employers, and of living by his pencil. He therefore gave up bookselling and made himself a draughtsman.

The art of lithography, which was then a perfectly novel fashion, commenced its moment of popularity about this time, and Français, who had a special talent for this sort of designing, soon acquired a positive genius and a decided reputation, in making lithographs after the paintings in vogue. At the same time, he began to paint; he frequented the studio of Gigoux, where he became a comrade of Henri Baron; but Corot



was the artist who exercised the greatest influence on the talent of Français among the painters of the period under consideration.

In submitting himself thus to the influence of Corot, whose talent was then often denied, Français found himself in opposition to public taste, and counted among the revolutionists and romantics, although his disposition, more inclined towards exactitude of design than towards the

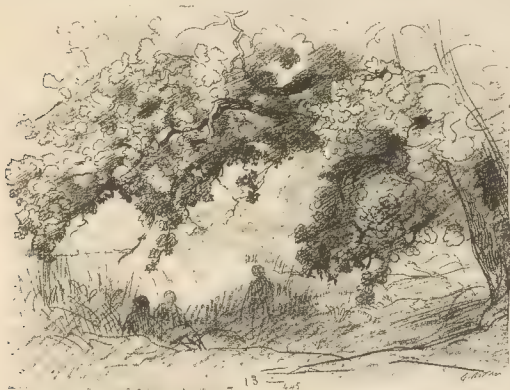
free handling usual with the colorists, rather would seem to give him a place in the ranks of the classical artists. But the colorists were very friendly with him, precisely because they found in him the faculty which they generally lacked, although he sympathized with them in their way of seeing Nature on many accounts. He thus became in some sort the



titled lithographer of the young school, and the canvases of Théodore Rousseau, of Jules Dupré and of Corot, whose regular interpreter he was, were popularized by his crayon. The public found in the lithographs of Français all the brilliancy and effectiveness which allured it in the works of the colorists, at the same time with the precision of drawing and the science with which the artist corrected their negligence and brought their works nearer to the

comprehension of the masses.

This sort of eclecticism in art has always remained the characteristic trait of the talent of Français, who remained in some sort the bond of union between the disagreeing schools.



The public became a great lover of his lithographs, although they were often copies of works which it had much trouble in comprehending. Thus Français had already a great notoriety at a time when Corot was struggling with all his might to get himself accepted, and avowed his own boundless admiration for his master when it seemed singular to certain persons. A fact singular enough, which belongs to the youthful

period of Français, will make us understand the relative position of these two artists.

Corot's "Shepherd," exhibited in 1840, and now in the Museum of Metz, is one of the most beautiful of the artist's paintings, and Corot himself referred to it as among his most valuable things.

To look at this admirable landscape, it is hard to understand how slow the reputation of Corot was in making itself known, at least in the mass of the public. It is certain that at this period collectors would not have



his works at any price. Thus, when he sold the picture in question, he ran off to see Troyon, and announced the event with an air half delighted but half discontented too: as Troyon could make nothing out of his expression, he laughed and explained: "I had my collection complete; now it is broken!"

To make up for the lack of a public, so contemptuous of Corot, certain young artists began to appreciate his landscapes and form a group around him. Français, who was among these,

made a lithograph of the "Shepherd" which came out in *l'Artiste*. Corot sent a copy home to his relations, who looked upon him as a frightful dauber, drawn towards an art for which he had no call by a passion as unreasonable as it was irresistible. The paternal Corot was therefore greatly astonished to learn that a work of his son's had been copied in a periodical. Without understanding anything about it, but judging that a civility deserved another, he invited Français to dinner and gave him



an impressive reception. After the dinner he buttonholed the lithographer, and while thanking him for his good will towards his son, confessed to him all his apprehensions; he then asked him whether he thought he had really done a service in coming to the support of a poor lost boy who was pursuing a chimæra, and whether it would not have been kinder to discourage him openly. Français protested, and ardently avowed the admiration he felt for the talent of Corot. Upon this the old man looked sharply at him, as one who asks himself if he is the subject of a hoax, then began to shake his head with the full expression of his incredulity, and began to talk politely about indifferent matters. If ever man fulfilled the old adage that no one is a prophet in his own country, assuredly it was Corot. Français, on the contrary, has been more lucky, and has managed to acquire a position in art which has received both the suffrages of the painters and of the public at large.



After having long painted the environs of Paris and become, as it were, the official painter of the slopes of Bougival, Français undertook a journey to Italy, where he has several times since made a long stay. It used to be a joke to tell how Français first conceived the idea of going to that country. He had made a view of the plain of Marly, in which the last rays of sunset were seen appearing behind the circular arches of the aqueduct. A

picture-buyer took the canvas on the theory of its being a representation of the Campagna, and ordered a pendant, because the artist, he declared, was the only one who up to that time had known how to paint the Campagna of Rome. Upon this Français undertook the journey, his first, being willing to paint Italian views as facts within his acquaintance, after having done them so well without suspecting it. Doubtless the anecdote is apocryphal, but there is nothing impossible in it. However it might be, the scenery of Italy gave singular delight to our painter.



Français is of our landscapists the most conscientious. There is nobody so rigorous in drawing a tree, or the lie of the land, or a plant, or an edifice; none has a profounder knowledge of perspective. In his



water-colors, the charm especially belongs to the fact that nothing is neglected, but that every detail, however clear its articulation, contributes to the unity, without ever falling into dry anatomy. It has been sometimes said that his eye is of photographic precision; it would be more true to say that he applies to the drawing of his landscapes a science such as is commonly found in the portrait-painter only. He can give to each tree its individual physiognomy, assign to every branch the direction

it ought to take, designate the distinctive character of every shrub and plant, and thus avoid the monotony so often stifling the works of painters who believe that landscape may be treated by approximation.

A somewhat curious incident is told on this subject, a little thing which

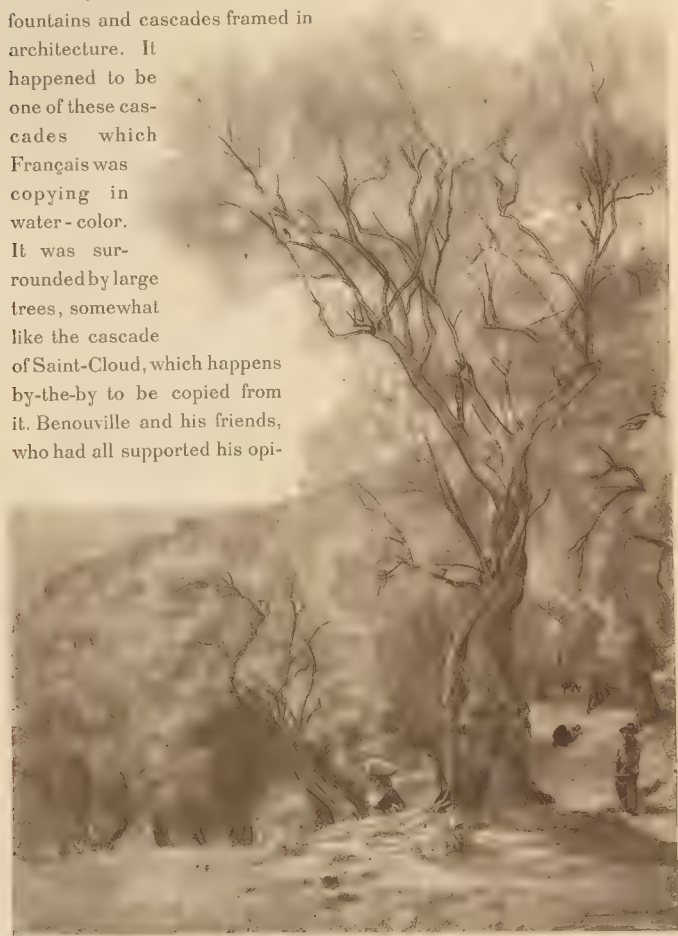


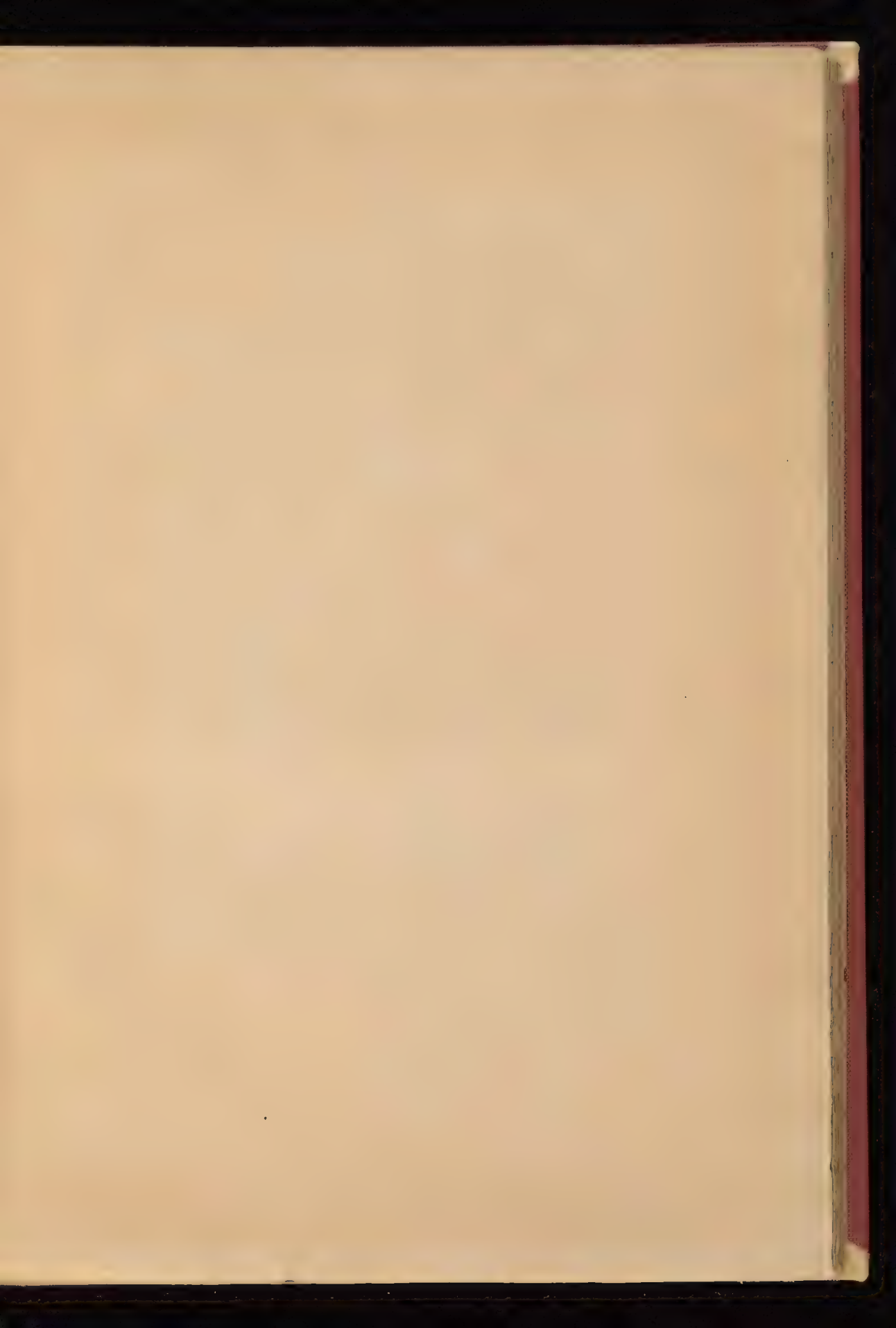
happened near Rome, in the small town of Frascati, where Français was living with several of his artist friends. The latter, among whom was Achille Benouville, an artist well known, declared that it was impossible to give to the drawing of a tree the same precision as to the drawing of a face, because human anatomy being a positive thing, you have always measuring-points by which you may correct your strayings, so conspicuous in a visage. In foliage, on the contrary, you have not the same sure rules, because accident goes for a great deal in the divergence of the branches, a divergency which, being liable to be changed by a thousand accidents, is the expression of no positive or inflexible law.

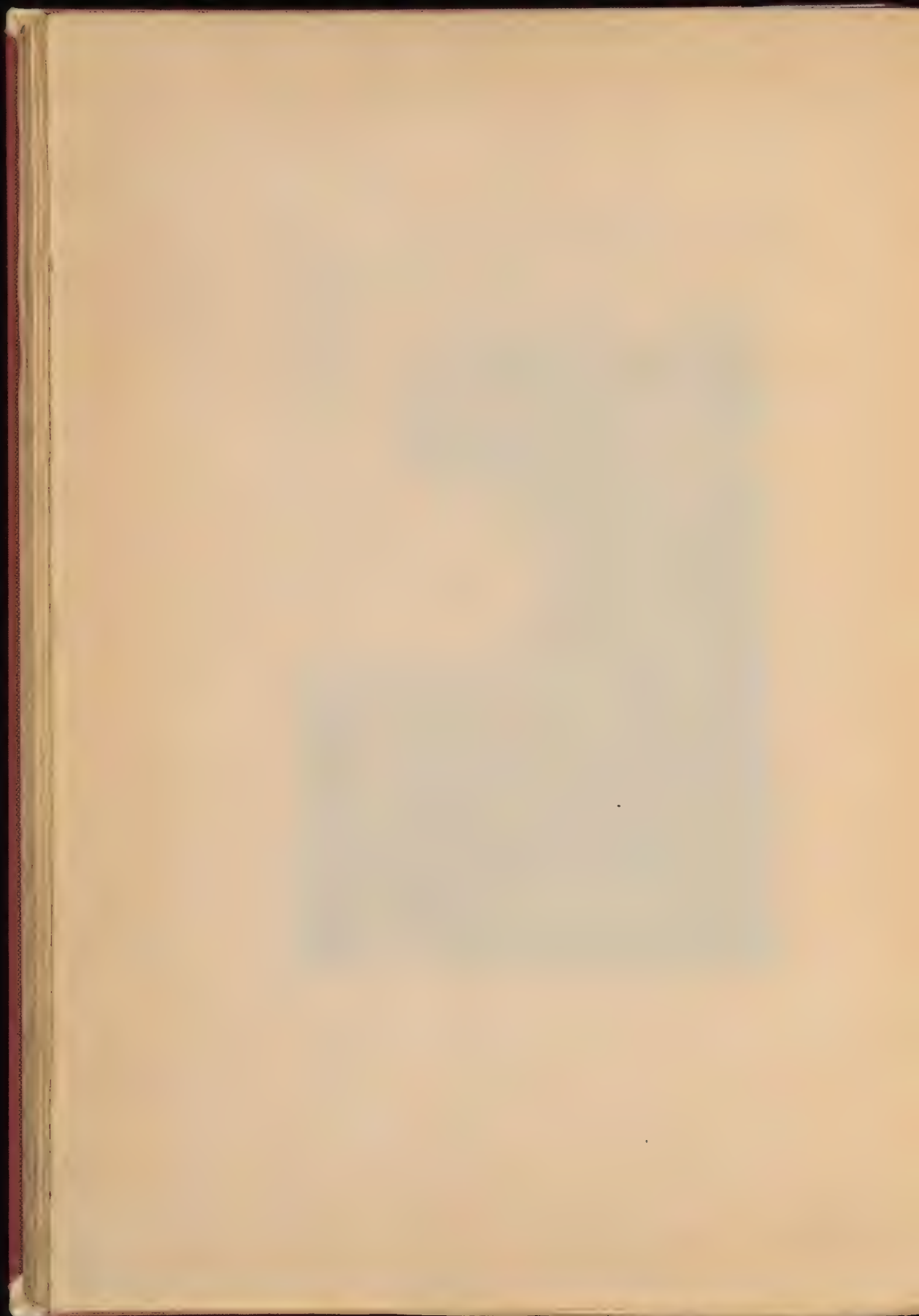


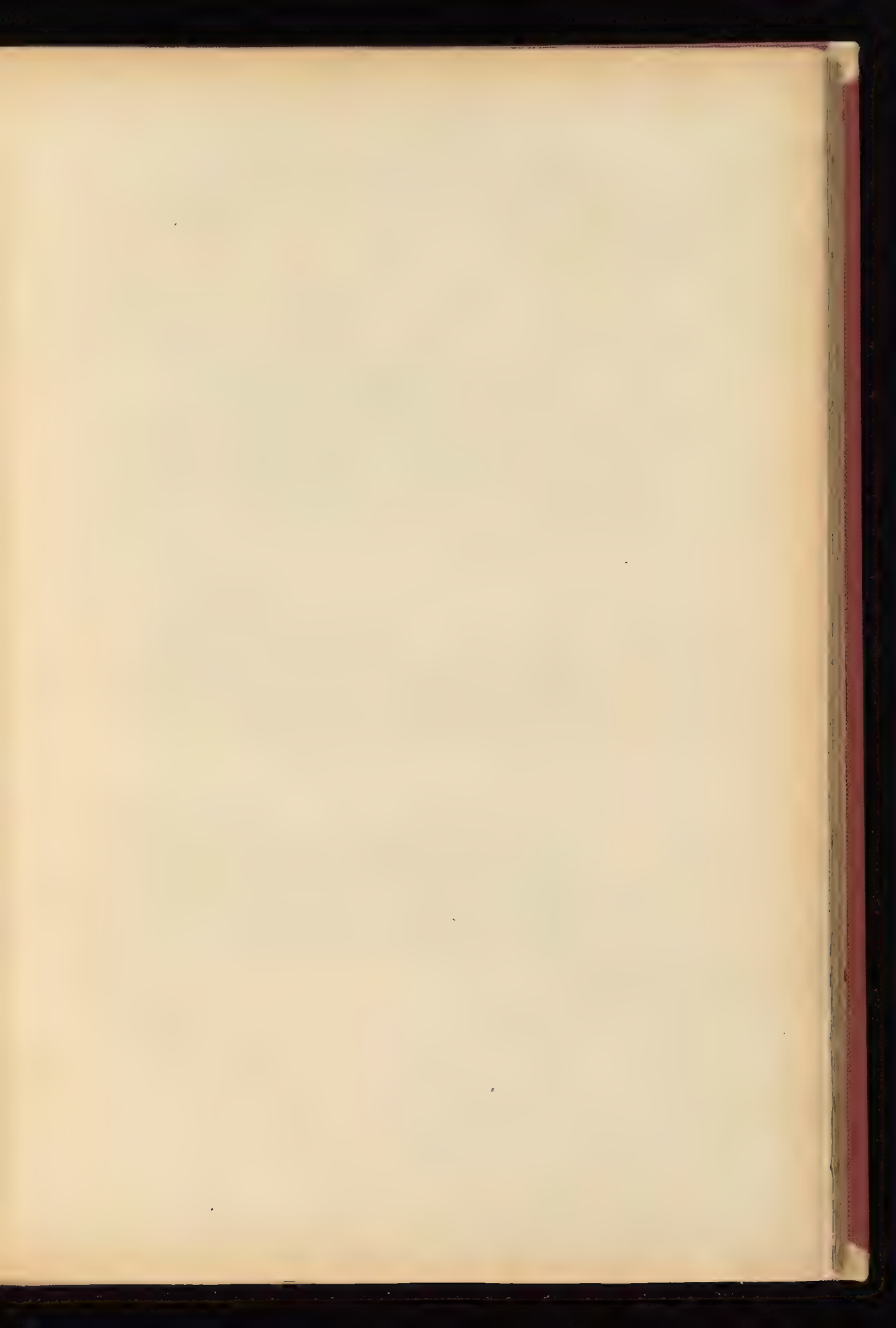
Français argued, on the contrary, that even if a tree has not measuring-points like a face, in its framework, it has other measuring-points, and may have its portrait painted like a man. He insisted that you can define its character, so as to demonstrate that your tree is as different from another tree as a person is from anybody else. Declaring that he made a drawing of a tree as conscientiously as the drawing of a human likeness, he challenged his companions to point out the slightest incorrectness in the design of a large aquarelle he was then at work upon. The gage was taken up; a wager was laid between himself and Benouville; it was agreed that the trifling beverages consumed in the Frascati tavern should be paid by Français if Benouville could find him at fault, by Benouville if no error could be

found in the drawing of the landscape which Français was executing at the moment. The composition which Français was painting was in the Villa Torlonia, so well known from its fountains and cascades framed in architecture. It happened to be one of these cascades which Français was copying in water-color. It was surrounded by large trees, somewhat like the cascade of Saint-Cloud, which happens by-the-by to be copied from it. Benouville and his friends, who had all supported his opi-



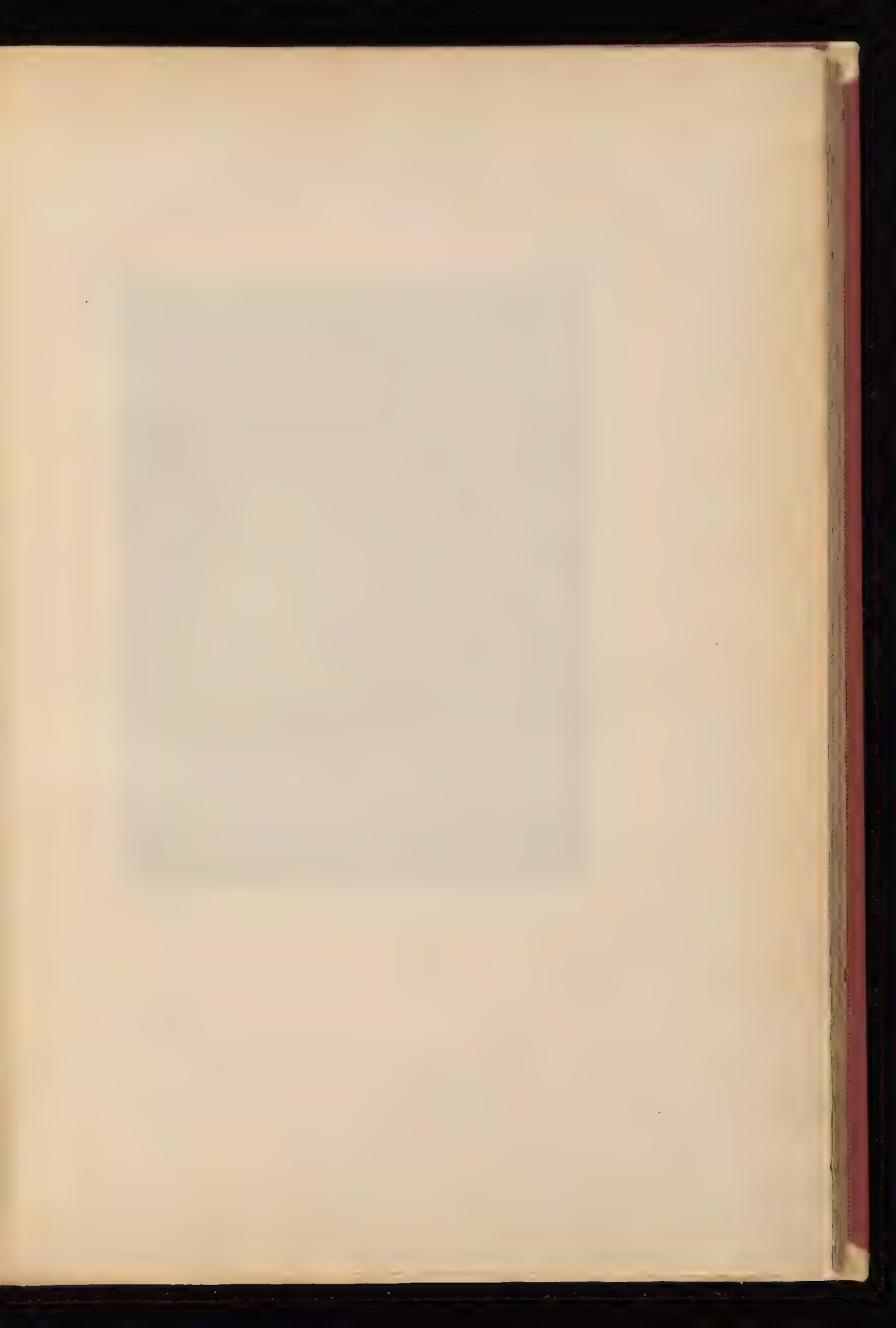


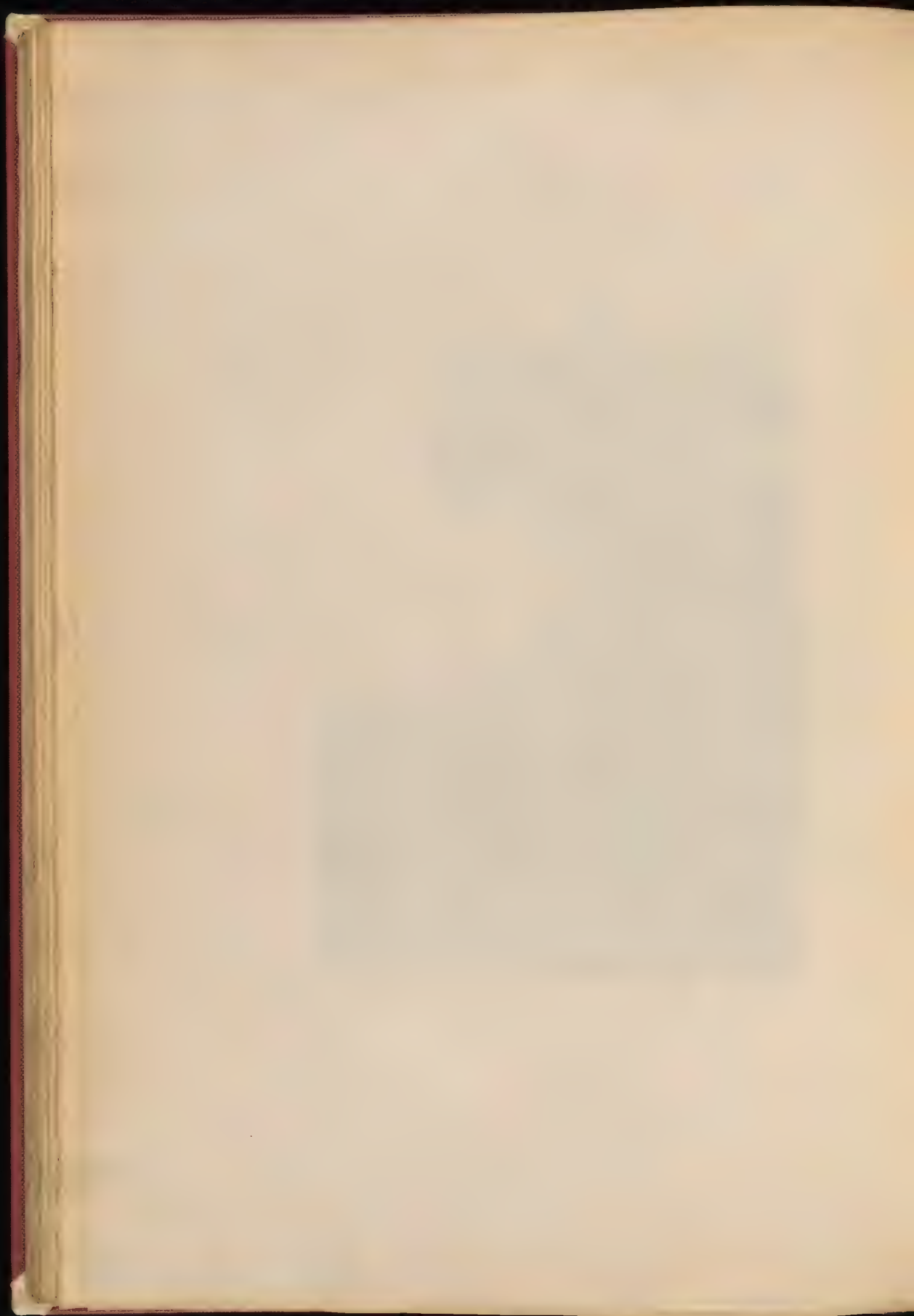




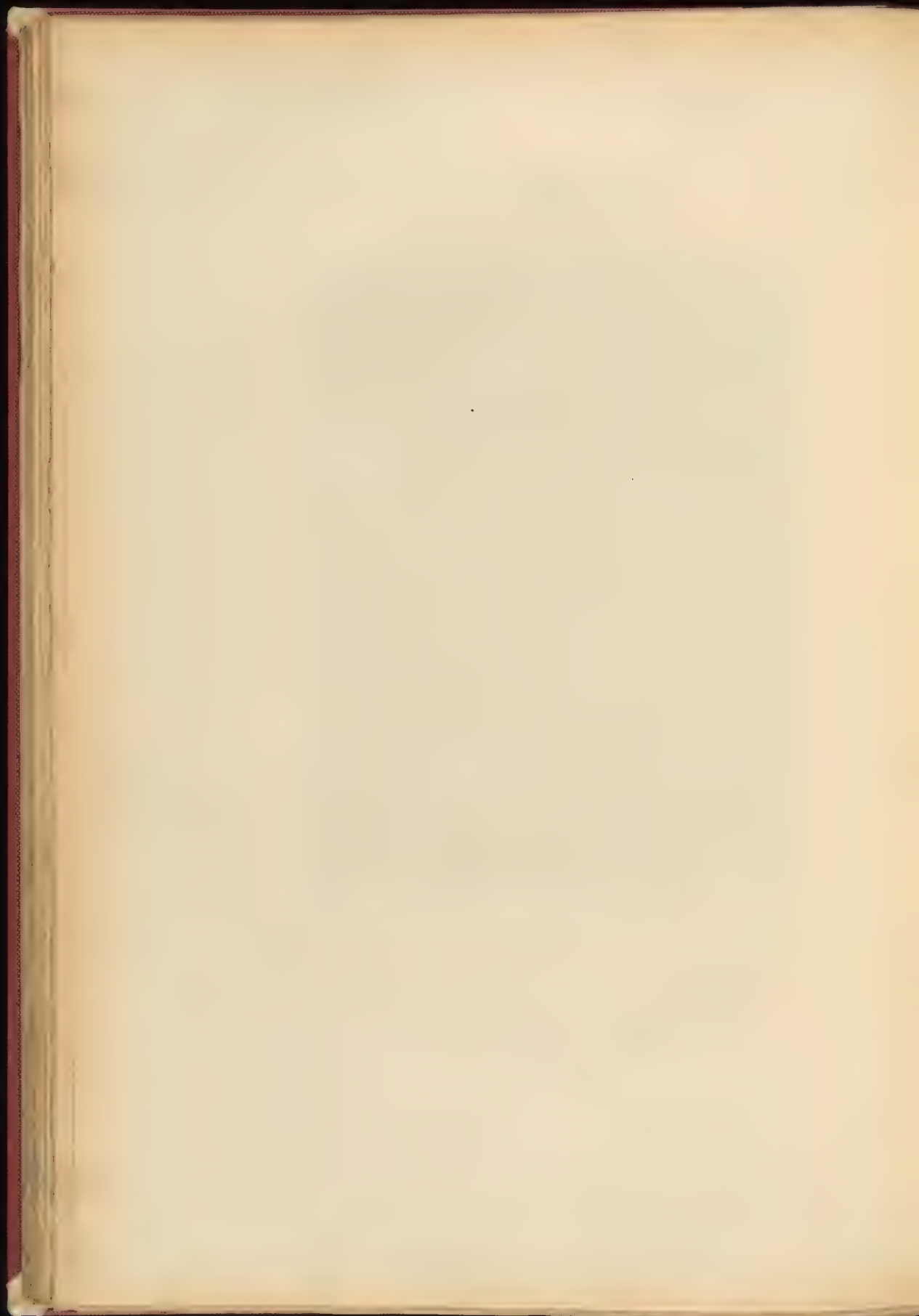




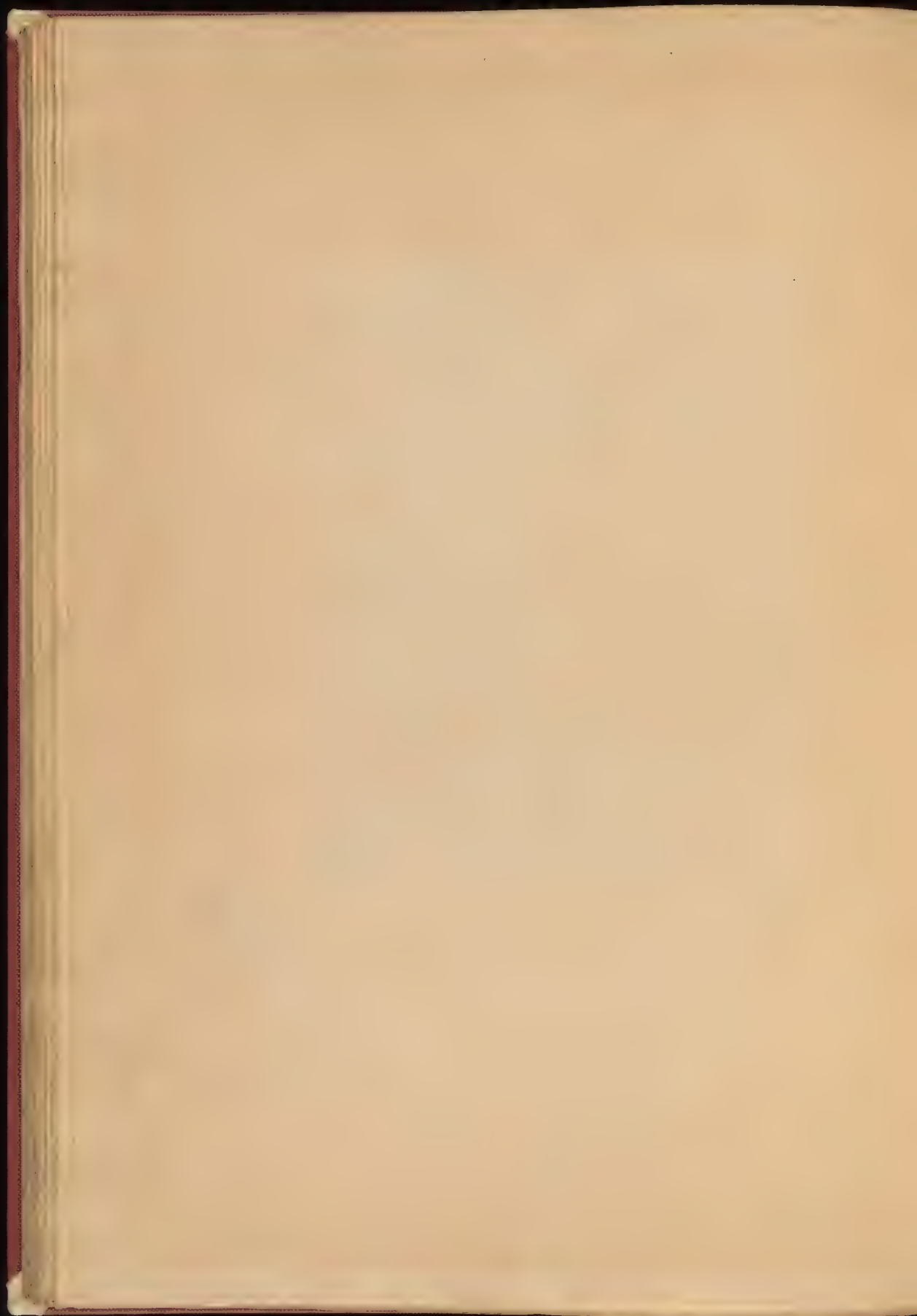




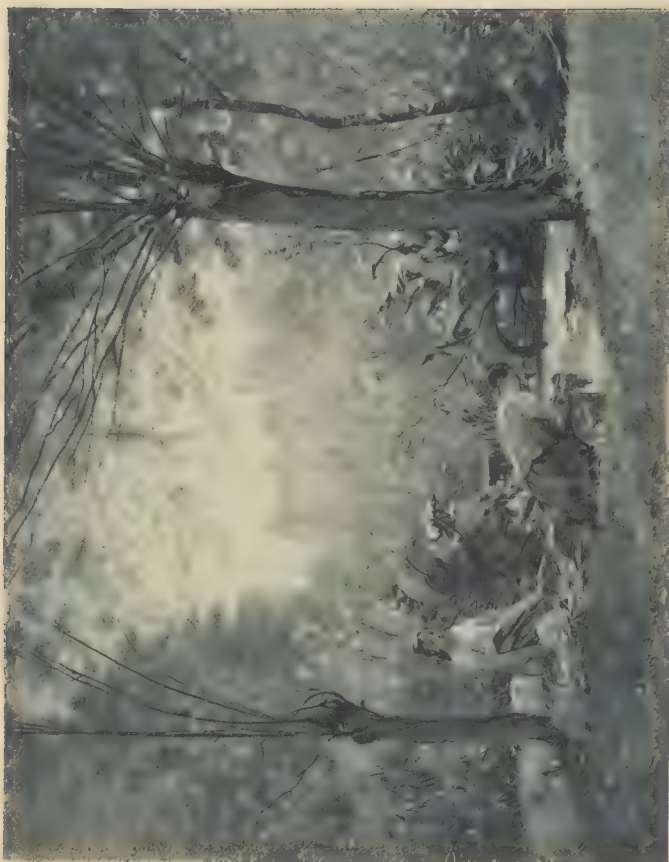


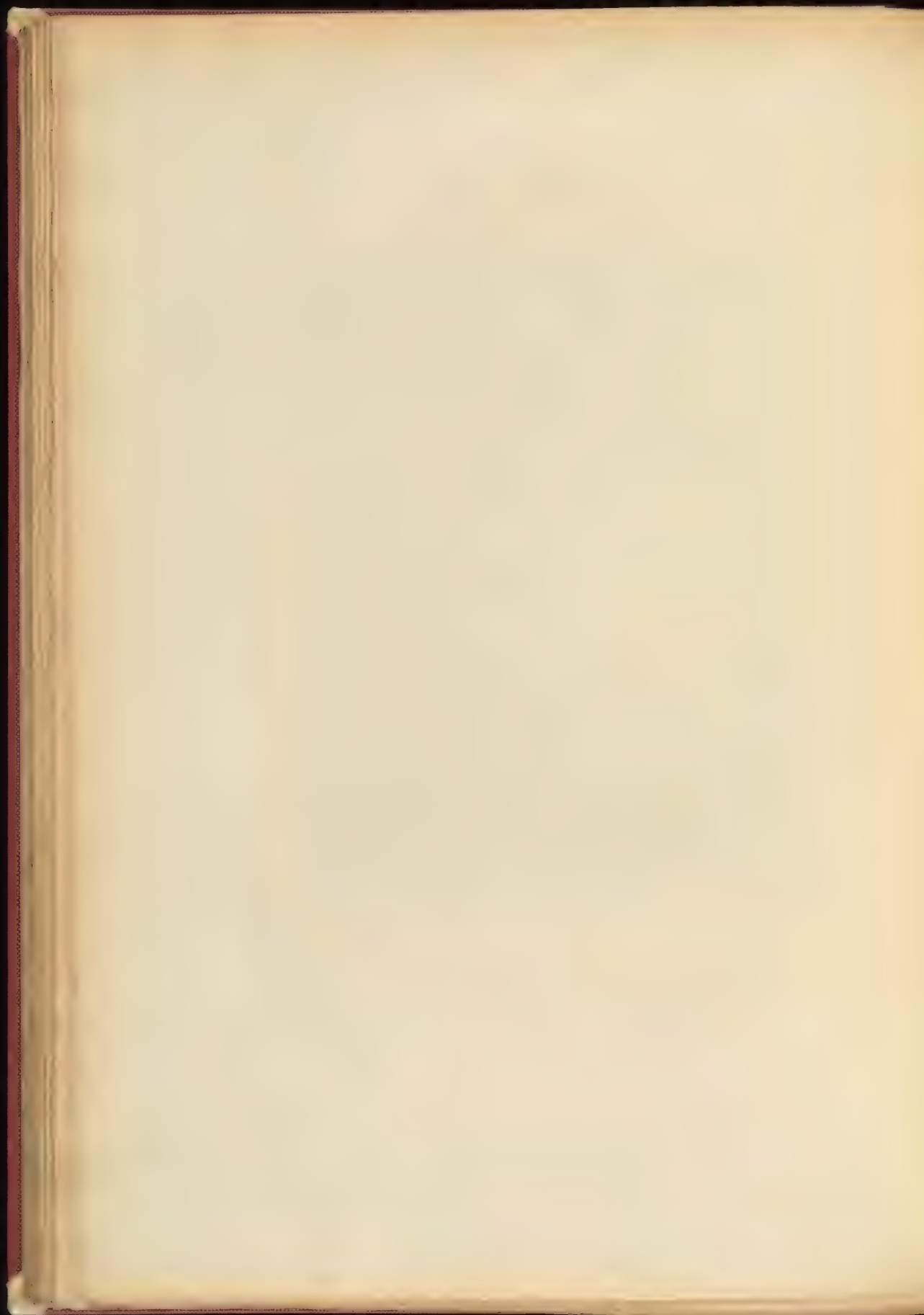






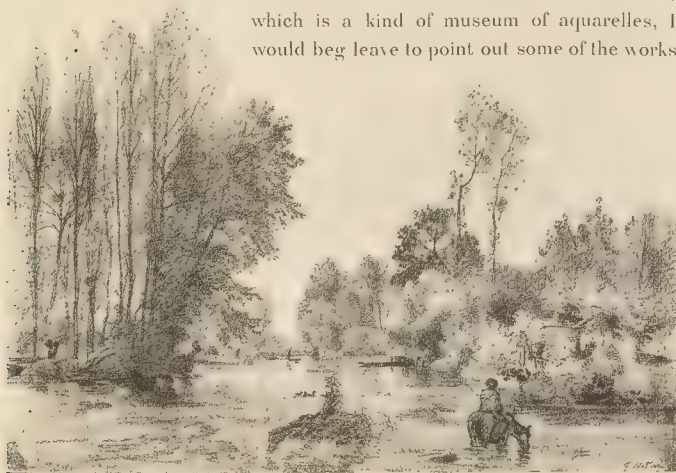






nion, were sure enough that his adversary would be found perfectly correct in the drawing of the fountain and all the architectural part of the picture, but he hoped confidently to find him at fault in the drawing of his trees. It was in vain, however, that he spent half an hour in scrutinising the aquarelle and comparing it with its model, that is to say with Nature. Neither he nor his friends could find anything to correct, and when Français offered them the pencil, begging them to rectify the mistakes he might have made, they frankly acknowledged their defeat, and declared that it was a real portrait, so true that any alteration would only lose the likeness. We may add that this water-color now forms a part of the fine Hartmann collection, and that it is as agreeable in tone and aspect as firm in design.

While we are in this wonderful collection, which is a kind of museum of aquarelles, I would beg leave to point out some of the works



which are to be found there, for nowhere else is the artist under consideration so well represented, and we may say that he keeps there his masterpieces, at least in water-color art.

There should be mentioned first, among the souvenirs of Italy, which are very numerous, the "General View of Florence," that of the very picturesque village of "Genzano," the "Souvenir of Lake Nemi," the "View of Rome," with St. Peter's on the horizon, the "Campagna with the Tiber," and especially the "Ruins of the Palace of the Cæsars." This large water-color,



is well worthy to figure in the Louvre, where it would have the distinction of proving the merit of our contemporary school alongside of the works of the past. The souvenirs of Northern Italy also occupy an important place in the fine collection. In fact, during these latter years, Français has been a great deal in Nice and along the Riviera of Genoa, and has executed numerous aquarelles in that beautiful region so well known to tourists as the Cornice Road.



Français has rendered its various aspects with his customary fidelity, and in some of his aquarelles has arrived at an incredible intensity of light. We would point out first his gardens filled with palms and exotic plants, printing their outline on the deep southern sky, so different from that of our country.

We would more particularly notice the "Garden of Nice," the "View of Villafranca," and the "Parterre of the Villa Gentile," near Nice. It is proper to insist on this last aquarelle because it was done last year, and shows the latest phase of the artist's talent. Surprisingly fresh in tone, it charms the eye like a bouquet. A fact to note, because it is a rather rare one in the artist's work, is that there is no body-color in the landscape, all the high-lights being



saved out. Other water-colors, done in the same country, show us the ragged rocks of the coast, or take us to the olive shades, those trees whose picturesque construction is better understood by Français than by



any one. Everywhere one is startled at the conscience which he applies to designing the bald mountains, or their covering of brush, equally characteristic of the region. Finally, in the views of towns, such as "Antibes," or "Genoa," the silvery color of the olives



gives way to the golden tints of buildings plated by the sunset, which catches on the sharp edges of the rocks, burns through the sky, and seems to die into the blue limpidity of the sea.

Several water-colors executed around Compiègne seem to as particularly remarkable. The one in which are seen a number of washer-women in the high grass of the foreground, with the noble towers of the castle of Pierrefonds behind, is one of the most beautiful done by the artist. While, in the environs of Paris, the neighborhood which the painter has long marked with his special preference, is the lovely "Valley of Cernay," with its rivulet flowing among the rocks, and its fine pools bordered with great trees and rustic mills.



But it is time to say a word about the water-colors methods of Français; they are indeed very complicated, for the talent of a painter depends on his experience and his sensibility, and the recipes which may be at his service only take the place of an implement which he uses more or less easily as he has more or less of the

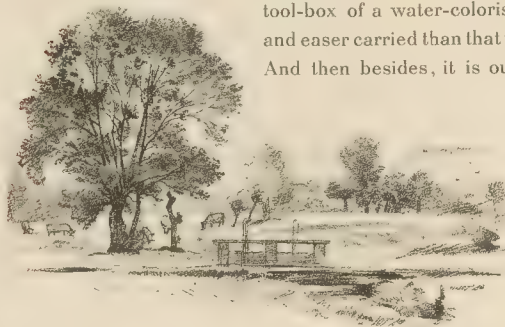
habit. Thus it has long been admitted that in a water-color the high-lights should be saved out on the paper, and body-color strictly prohibited. If this theory were without exception Français would certainly be no example to follow, for in nearly all his aquarelles body-color has been employed. It would have been, besides, difficult for him to have done without it, since he has almost always used tinted papers, so that he was obliged to have recourse to *gouache* because the reserved paper was not available for the lights. In latter times, however, he seems to have used white paper in preference. But he has one thorough-going principle, and this is that the color should not be started until the drawing is well defined, be it with the pen, or with a crayon sharp enough to make the form clear.

It is a very curious thing to compare in the studio of the artist an oil-painting and a water-color of the same subject; but I should be put to it if I had to explain my preference, which generally would be for the aquarelle. I believe, though, that I should not be going too far if I claimed that the canvas was without faults, and the water-color full of felicities.

The aquarelles are always copies directly made from Nature. The tool-box of a water-colorist is less cumbrous and easier carried than that used in oil-painting. And then besides, it is our artist's old habit

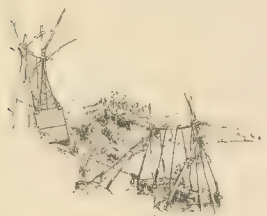
to study his forms, when working after Nature, by means of his water-color washes and his crayon sharpened fine.

As for the oil-color painting, always a larger affair, it has to be made in the studio. It has more thought in it, but less spontaneousness. The artist, having plenty of time before him, improves his composition until it becomes more perfect,





distributes his little figures to animate his scene, and follows his intelligence, which hardly ever deceives him, in all those finishing-touches which complete and polish the picture. But the study had a simplicity and a flavor of the soil which is not always so fully revealed in the painting, because the study, with all its incompleteness, is the result of a closer, a more direct communion of the artist with nature.



The works of Français commend themselves by a most vivid sense of reality, but he is in no wise a realist, insomuch as he has never undertaken to introduce the accent of triviality. The greater part of his pictures are an exact reproduction of things he has seen, but the natural elevation of his character results in his being always attracted by

Nature's grander or more refined effects, and never by what she may include of common or vulgar.

Our artist is sometimes haunted by the Greek mythology, and it must be granted that few painters are so thoroughly endowed as he with the antique spirit. His

"Sacred Grove" is a theme seductive with elegance and classicity; Theocritus never dreamed of anything more poetic yet more true. If in this picture we enjoy the latest glimmer of sunset, the crescent of the moon begins to rise behind his



"Orpheus," where a chorus of young nymphs pass across the distance to lay their flowers on the tomb of Eurydice. A charming canvas, too, is the "Daphnis and Chloe" of the Luxembourg Gallery. Daphnis has just thrown his fishing-line, without leaving Chloe, whom he holds in his embrace. All around are seen the deep and shadowy masses of oak-trees, with the mantling green of the fields from which leap the digitalis and

bindweed, while the stream plashes softly to freshen this laughing spring-time already so genial and gay.

Français long ago absorbed all the recompenses which the Paris Salon affords ; if he does not yet belong to the Institute of France, the fact results from the organisation of that body, which cannot recruit a new member until there is vacant fauteuil ; and only one landscape-painter's fauteuil exists in the Academy of Fine-Arts. But of Français is kept waiting for a while before the seat which is his due among the French Immortals, he has long acquired it in the opinion of the public. He has a talent which no one contests, and the opinion we have of him will be that of posterity as well.

RÉNE MÉNARD









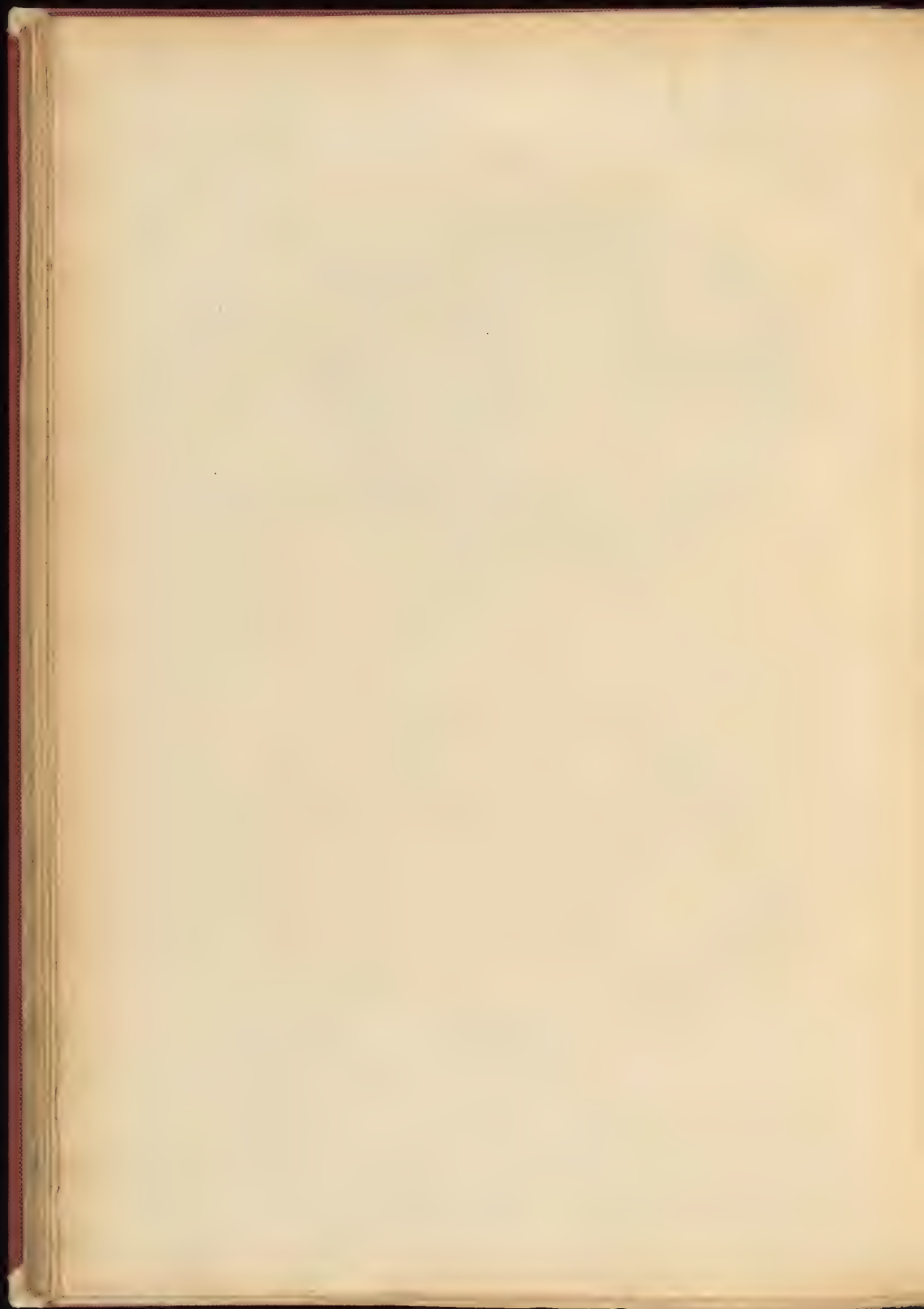




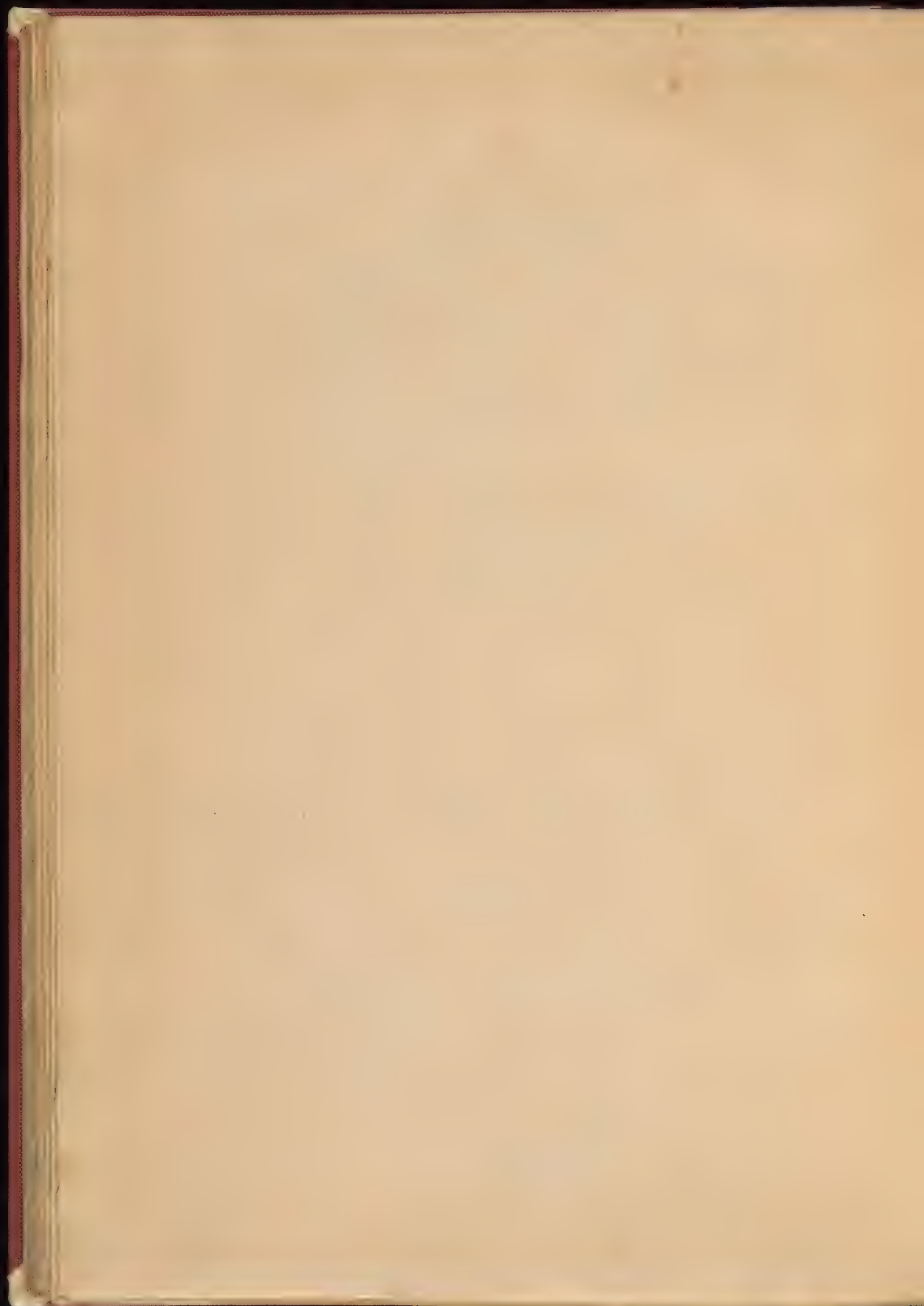








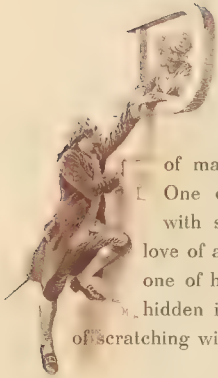








## MAURICE LELOIR



URING the fourth exhibition of the French Aquarellists at the gallery in the rue de Sèze, the mass of visitors lumped themselves together snow-ball like, before a master-work in water-color representing some sheriff's officers of the last century, in the act of making an inventory of a set of Louis XVI furniture. One of these curs of appraisers, a big bulbous fellow, with sly expression, lifts up and exhibits with a laugh a love of a little pink pair of stays, with silver stitching, which one of his comrades has just drawn out of a secret closet hidden in the wall, whose mystery he has unearthed by dint of scratching with his nails and sounding with the head of his wand.

A third person, leaner than the stick under his arm, and looking like a beadle escaped from his pews, catalogues in a register the pillage of Beauty by Law. You would say three ravens in the nest of a dove. The fabrics lie over



the floor; the little trunks disembowelled, the jewel-caskets ruptured at the lock, the fans and the feathered parasols, all the elegant toys of a young, rich, pleasure-loving lady's home, seem to be shedding those tears of inanimate things which Virgil describes. A stout lady's maid, attractive and plump, watches the sacking of the apartment, furious but unable to interfere. The picture is complete and the drama delicious.

One evening, when I was admiring for about the tenth time the delightful wit of this composition, its picturesque design, its novel arrangement, and all the eminently French merits which illuminate it, a neighbouring personage rapped me over the shoulder. It was none other than Maurice Leloir, the author of the aquarelle, the painter of inexhaustible fancy, he whom the people have already called the fourth Saint-Aubin. I paid him my sincere compliments: "My faith," said I, "this is a case to say with the ballad-singer, they have none such in England."

"Know then, my dear critic," began the artist, "that this little pink pair of

stays has a history. I bought them in the country, of an old secondhand merchant, a perfect Jew, though a Christian. As my better luck would have it, he had never taken them out of their box; accordingly, he had never spied the roll of papers secreted in the cotton, and on which were written such things, all sorts of things in fact! Now, if you would like to make yourself acquainted with this manuscript, you can tell me what you think of it. The

brothers de Goncourt have just found on the quays the manuscript of the count de Caylus, which has aided to complete the life of Watteau. For my part, I have found in a curiosity-shop what may serve to make out the history of the loveliest waist of the eighteenth century." And next morning I received from Maurice Leloir the curious roll in question, on whose first leaflet I read, in large text : *Memoirs of a pair of stays.*



## I

I was made to measure by D..., the celebrated ladies' "taylor," whom every one knows perfectly. The device by which the measure was obtained is something uncommon. She of whom I was to be the mould was eighteen years of age; she was just as waxen as possible, and she had such personal advantages as to neck and waist that she was especially coquettish about them. But her parents, old creatures, formal as Jansenists, and alarmed by



the furious sermons against corsets, thundered by their priest—in those days it was the mode to preach against us in open pulpit — would not her of the new fashions for their daughter, so the illus-

trious D... was shown to the door. But D... had the spirit of a true artist, one who would not be beaten by a trifle. Notified of the desires of the young lady, he procured the connivance of the chamber-maid, and by means of a ropeladder, like a very Faublas, he introduced himself by night into the dressing-room, and there took the measures required. I may say without vanity that never did stays fit better the beauties of

which they were to by the mask and the demonstration. I am the true portrait of the slenderness and sensibility of my proprietress, just as the bowl of Paris was the perfect mould of Helen's bosom.

## II

The father of my mistress was a most ridiculous wiseacre, wholly occupied with ornithology. His days were passed in a cage. He chirped and talked bird-language with his canaries. The old countess, his wife, cemented to her high-backed chair, with its stuffed side-pieces, napped gently until the long nap of death disposed of her. Sylvia, — that was my proprietress' name, — Sylvia treated them respectfully. But I, who



touched her heart so closely, I know that it often beat the bushes. She was eighteen years old, observe, and her figure was now turned to perfection.

The first time I was tried on — oh! with what precautions! — I felt a delightful fullness. I adhered already as firmly as possible to her form, and I embraced it as never lover embraced his innamorata. But D... considered that all was not yet as it should be. In pulling the stay-lace he dared to set a knee against her graceful little back! I thought the lace would break. Ah! if the adept in ornithology had seen us all at that moment! very well, if you will believe me, nothing gave in the whole carpentry, and nature had naught to complain of in the masterpiece of stay-making. If the white shoulders turned rosecolor, that was



all. As for myself, it seemed to me, in that instant, that I was the most privileged being on earth.

### III

My coming out in the world coincided with that of my young mistress. It was at a court ball. I recollect that I was jealous, yes indeed! jealous with reason. Sylvia was to dance the minuet at this ball, and I counted on triumphing with her by the grace of her shape. I was thinking of how I should show off, and place in the best light, the exquisite ripeness of which I was the blabbing treasurer. The brocade glistened over my curvatures, the skirts radiated like a firework from my corselet of steel. But the ungrateful Sylvia was not satisfied with being a goddess from her hair to her waist; she had, besides, a pair of tiny feet of which she was proud, and I saw her, before she climbed into the chariot, make Martine put on them a pair of astonishing little slippers, in prunella, with heels of the most insolent elevation, of which heels I augured no good. Many a girl, thought I, runs away when she wears such shoes.



At the ball she carried off every heart. The quality would not turn their eyes on any but her. I felt their hardy arms surround me more pressingly than was strictly necessary, and I swelled with indignation. All of a sudden I was aware of an unusual, indeed of a redoubled palpitation. It was as if a Paris'apple, or two, was just ready to pounce from the parent tree in a high wind. A young man had approached Sylvia. He was whispering in her ear. The minuet began, and now it was the turn of the tiny slippers to attract every eye. Sylvia did not trip in the grass, for there was none handy, but after the minuet, a singular crackling advertised me that I was playing a new character, and that my functions were increased by those of a letter-box. By what

miracle Sylvia contrived to make place between me and herself for this triangle of musk-scented paper, I cannot understand to this day. My shape is not that of a hat-box, to be the repository of a "cocked-hat." The sheet was tender, but less tender than the celestial grindstone of which little by little it took the exact curve.

An old uncle of Sylvia's, a man in high favor at court, a former dragoon of the Queen's forces, and who had come to the ball as her escort, hunted out my pretty mistress at length and bore her away. I



was gratified with this step. He even made a pretty speech, which I appropriated to myself. "I am your *body-guard*," says he. I was flattered and touched, and I thought with disdain of the two little shoes, those stupid dwarfs, who could not for their part take care of scented notes nor further the loves of a pretty mistress. So Martine flung them into a corner, while I was put carefully into my handbox, where I went to sleep.

#### IV

A man who sees a big goose in a lane and finds it disputing his passage is not more confounded than was Sylvia's uncle when he learned the flight of his niece by the very language of ornithology. He brandished furiously an umbrella which he had, which he carried by day and slept with at night; he swore he would catch her and clap her in a convent.

But where was she?

Do you see this graceful boat which glides between the rushes, coasting a bank of verdure? It is the very weather for love, but especially for that pastoral and melancholic kind of love which had just been introduced as the very latest fashion by Rousseau, the philosopher of Geneva. And the boatwoman, sitting musingly in the prow, who is it but Sylvia! And the young flute-player, who outwarbles the thrushes and fills the groves with his rustic notes! I recognize him,





'tis he, the handsome minuet-dancer. Oh! Daphnis! Oh! Chloe! where are you navigating, on these perfidious waters of the Marne? The faithful oarsman listens to the music, leaning on his tiller, over which leap the water-insects and dragon-flies. "Celestial charms of Sylvia," indeed — and the echo, like a traitor, goes about telling everybody, "Sylvia, Sylvia!"

Alas! the hapless innocents, they hardly fancied that this echo was to be their destruction. Hidden in the lofty herbage, a man was watching them. He has his fatal umbrella and the handle thereof contains a sword. And you, my imprudent mistress, you threw me aside this morning, and I cannot protect you with my corselet of steel plated with silver!

But no, the dreadful uncle does not emerge from his hiding-place. If you are the brother of an expert in canaries you must carry out the character. What do "I hear?" he cries, "Are these the dicky-birds of my brother?" And then, when he looks close, they are too happy and too pretty, as they are. Time enough for vengeance. And the brother of the ornithologist still sits! in brood! "Celestial charms of Sylvia! Celestial charms of Sylvia!"

The wander arm-in-arm up the bank. An apple-tree leans up against a small hunting-lodge, an enchanted little shelter full of shepherdesses, who recline in tapestry around the walls, behind sleepy arm-chairs, in a dreamy twilight and in an atmosphere always cool. He has drawn her to the shadow of the old apple-tree, whose knotty arms



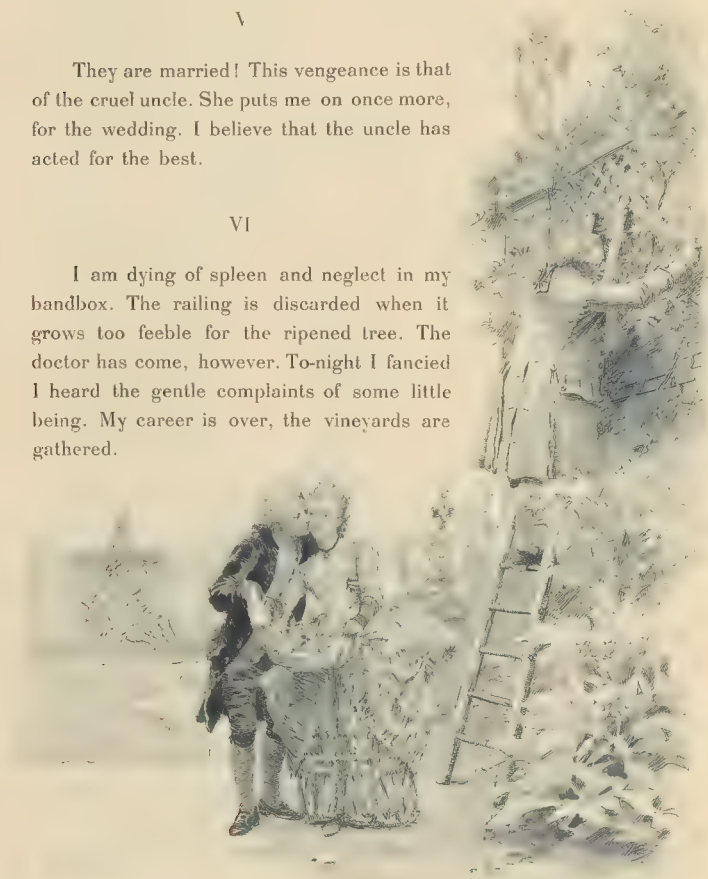
are lifted angrily above their heads. And a kiss sounds sharply, just as an ancient umbrella falls upon them with precision out of the tree. "Rascal!" cries the Queen's dragoon.

## V

They are married! This vengeance is that of the cruel uncle. She puts me on once more, for the wedding. I believe that the uncle has acted for the best.

## VI

I am dying of spleen and neglect in my handbox. The railing is discarded when it grows too feeble for the ripened tree. The doctor has come, however. To-night I fancied I heard the gentle complaints of some little being. My career is over, the vineyards are gathered.





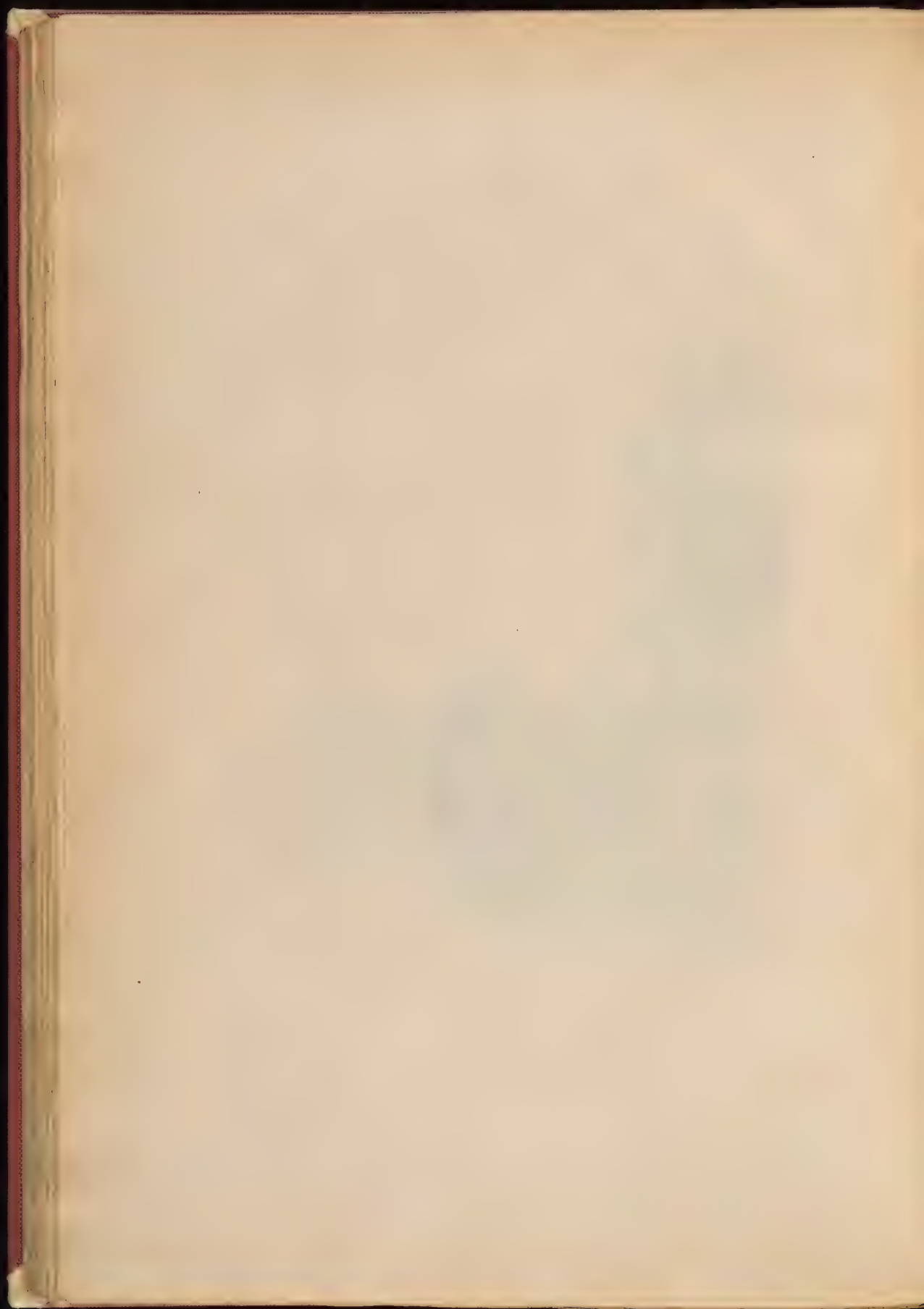




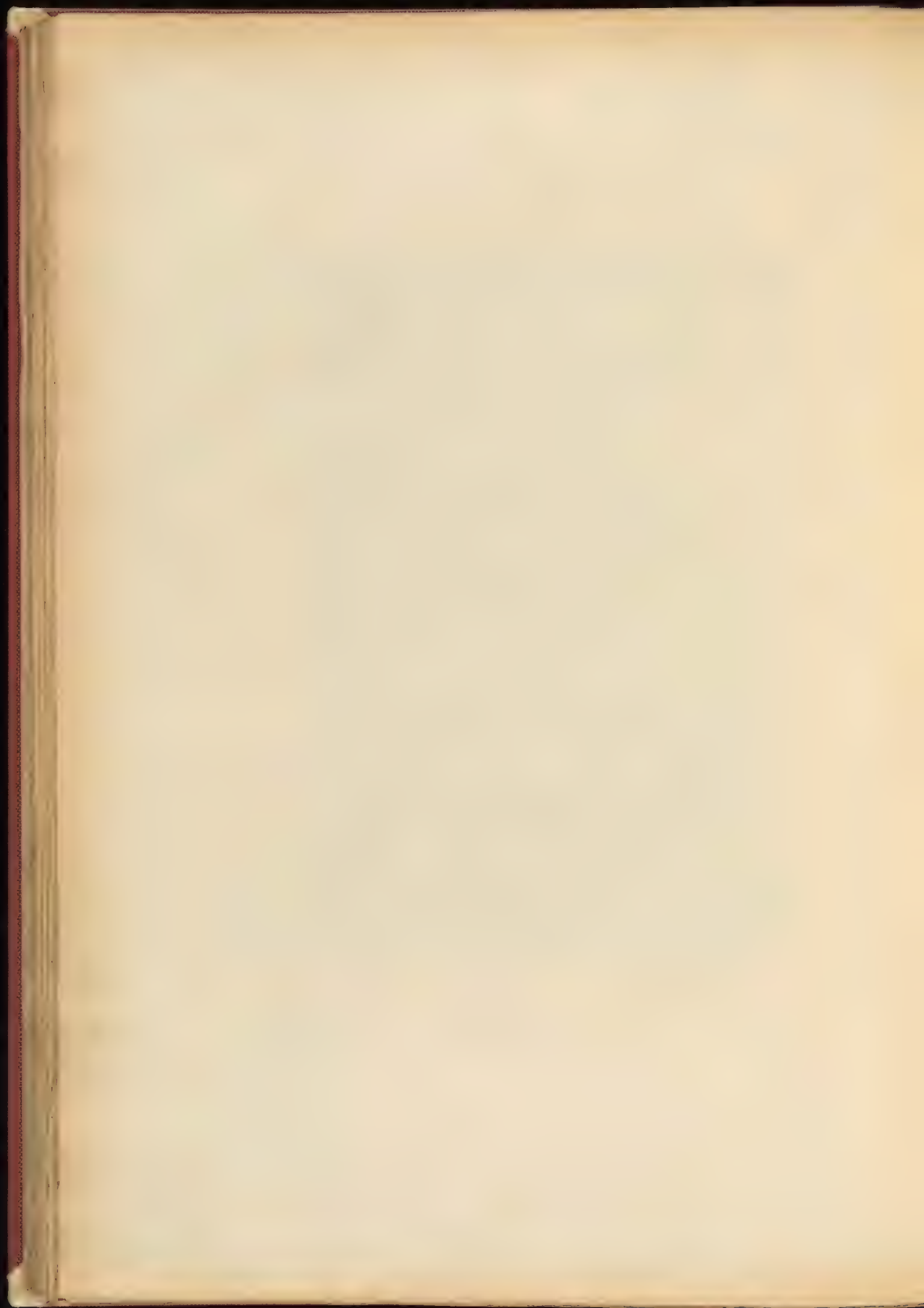


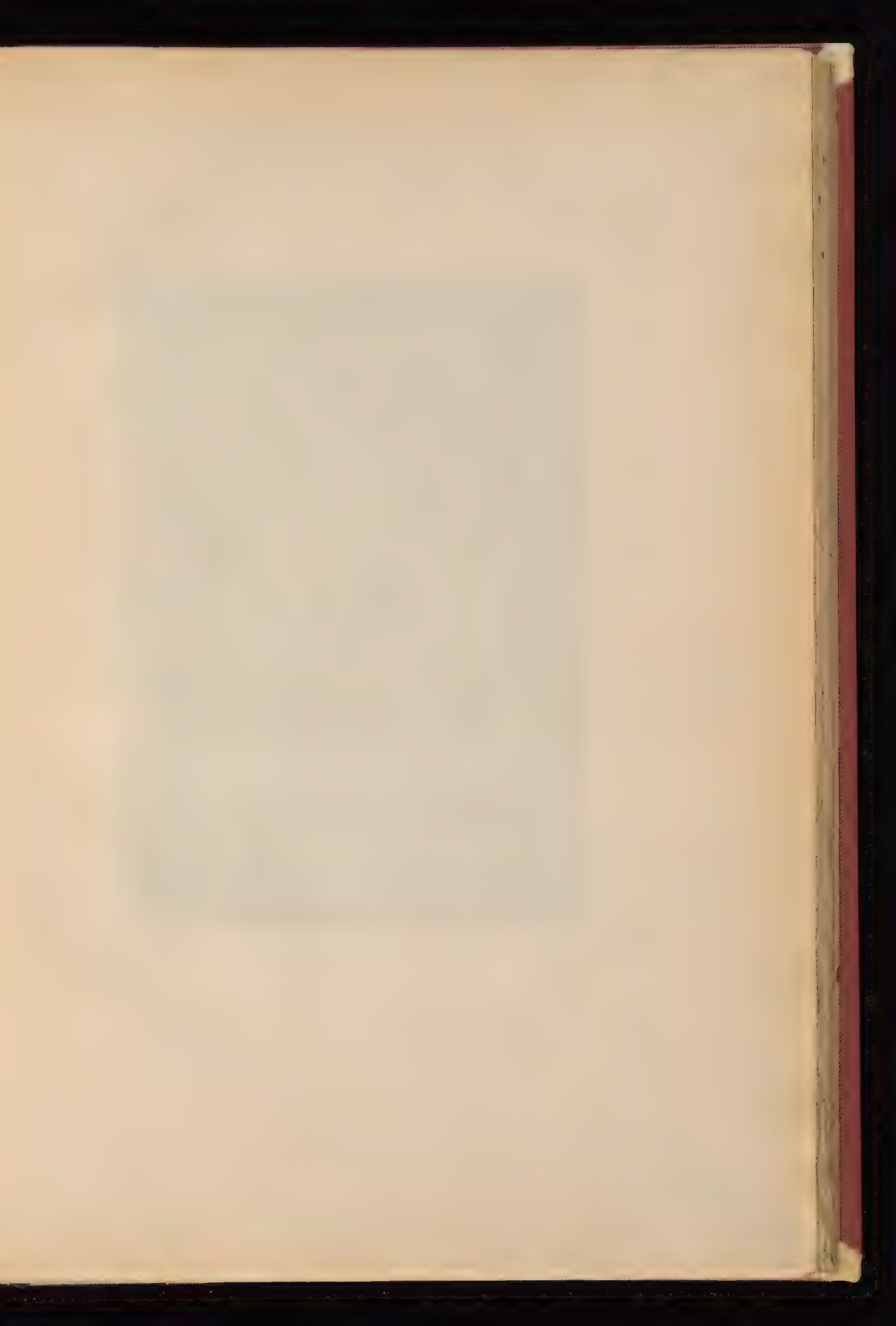


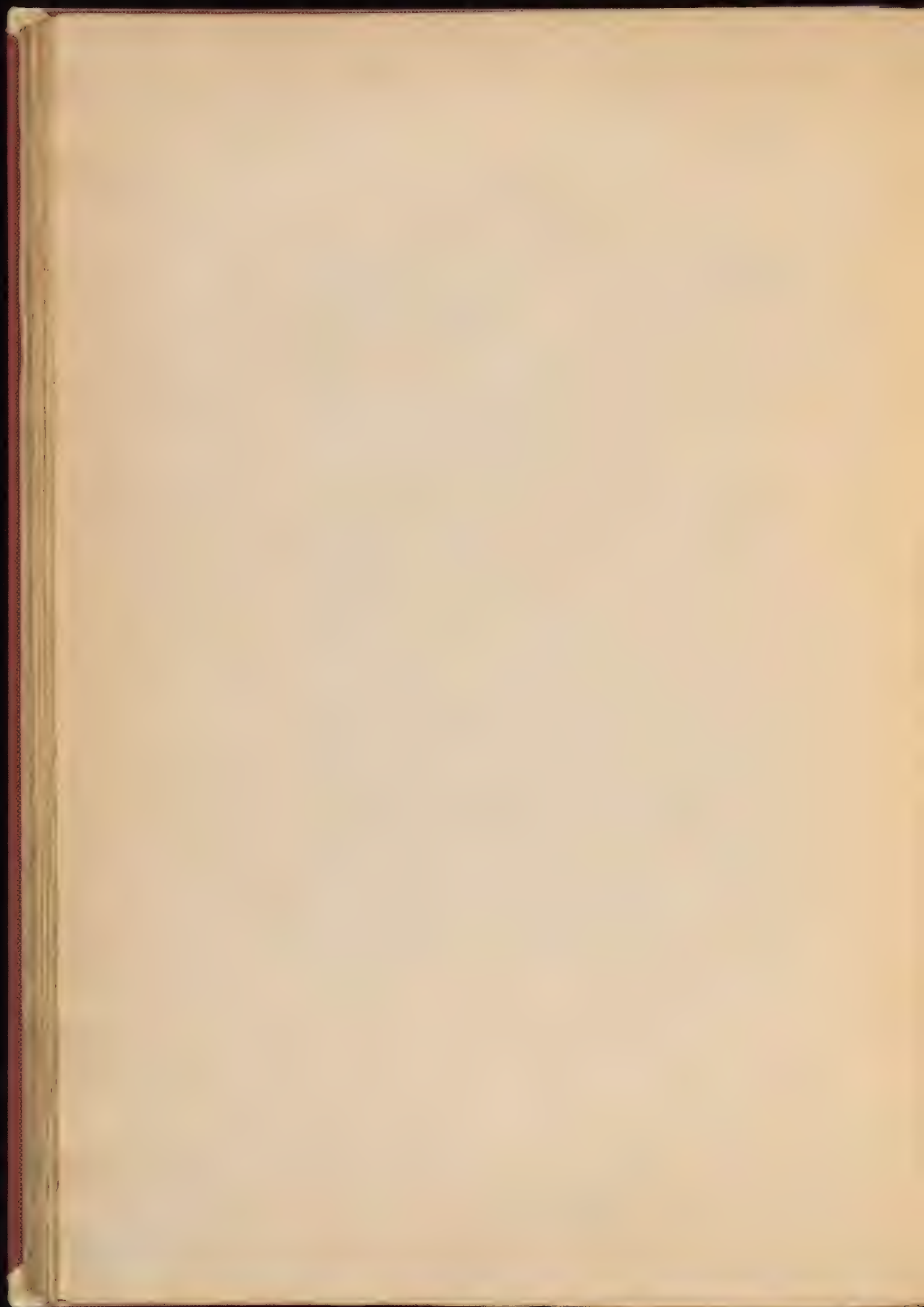






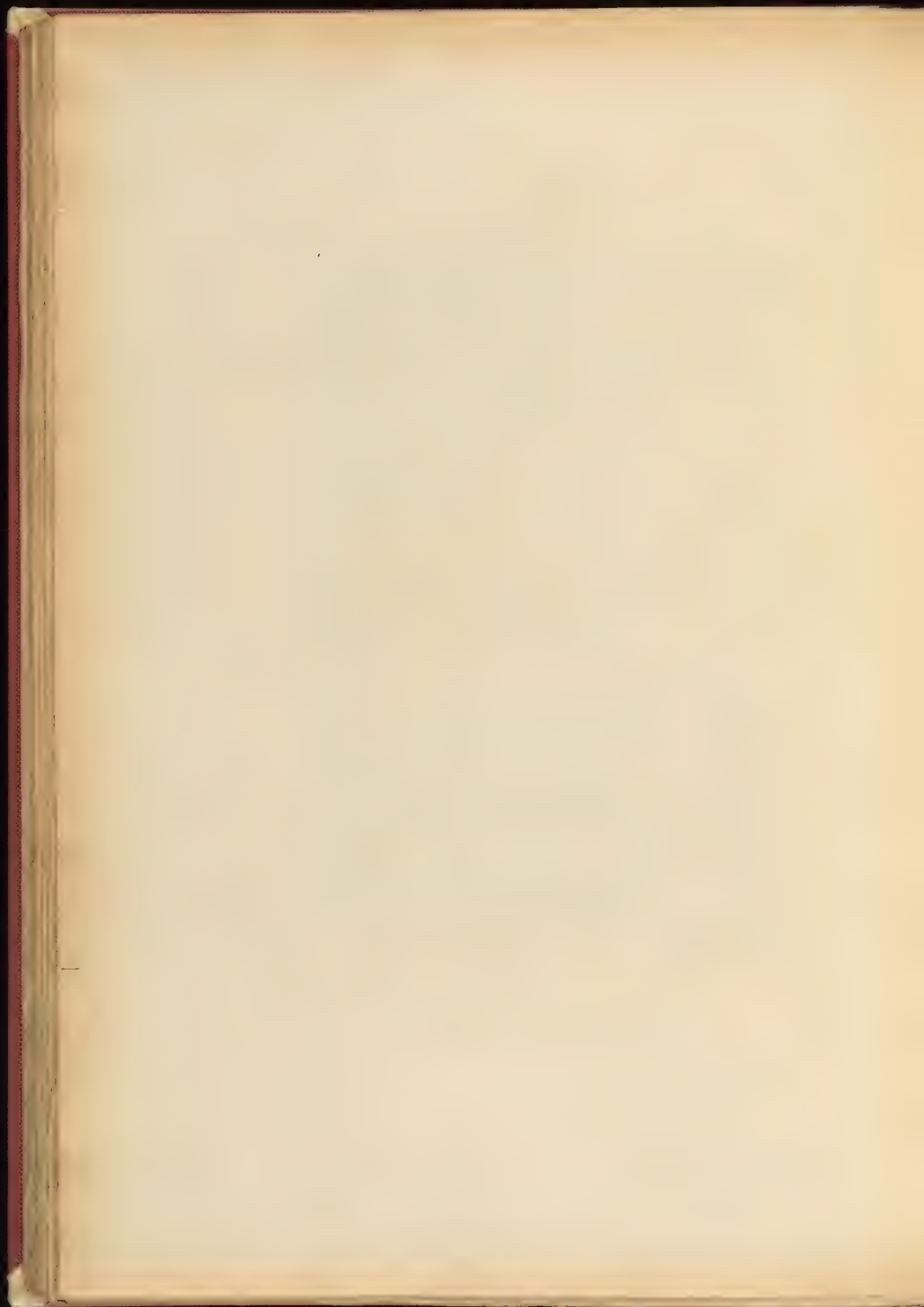












## VII

(A year later). Alas ! The count was a cheat. He has lost his fortune at the gaming-tables of Mother Guimard. There is a vendue at home. I will get into my secret closet. I have just seen the head of a sheriff's officer. Good-bye, Sylvia.

Certified copy by

Emile BERGERAT.

This art of water-color painting, now recognized, and duly furnished with admirers, markets, and signatures that have attained celebrity, has not triumphed for a greater space than some four or five years over the indifference of the public and the disdain of the students themselves. Before our Aquarellists banded together in a society its value was summed up by almost every artist in the opinion contained in the wellknown studio-song: " With a great deal of toil you can paint well in oil, but it's veritable slaughter to try to paint in



water." Eugène Lami alone, or very nearly alone, practised aquarelle assiduously ; he created a speciality in this art. Yet his productions hardly found an outlet except in England. Isabey and Meissonier washed a few sheets with water-color in their odd moments, to keep their hands flexible. I know of no water-color by Ingres, and those of Delacroix are very scarce. He hardly made use of his colors mixed with honey except for his travelling-sketches, such as those brought back from Morocco. Gavarni, on the contrary, used water-color often, especially after his return from London. For water-color comes to us from the other side of the Channel, a thing rather noteworthy. — Another thing not less curious

to notice is that all the names of those who created the art again in France end in I and y: Lami, Gavarni, Isabey, Fortuny.

The prodigies made with washes of color by this last artist, whose caprices often remind us of the dexterity of Watteau, have had considerable influence on that return to an old taste which at this moment is declaring itself for aquarelle. The rest has been due to the spirit of experiment among contemporary artists as to the various working methods and resources of their profession. There is no doubt that you can better represent certain things in water-color than in oil, and that pastel too has its peculiar capacity.

You may see, in short space from now, a society of pastel-painters forming itself, on the model of the one giving pretext for the present work. We are living in a time where everything ends, no longer in songs, as Figaro says, but in certified groups. The Muses are having their furniture distributed to them.



cruel tell-tales. You may do your best, exercise yourself with sponging and erasing, white paper is never twice white paper. If you apply body-color



the cheat laughs at you in its sleeve, and accuses you of incapacity. If the sheen of the Watman has lost its enamel underneath the color, your picture will have lost its glory, and there you are, convicted of using oil-painting methods, and of messing. You are disgraced.

I am not unaware that many of my fellows in criticism show themselves better-tempered than I on this subject, and that their eyes are less sensitive than mine to this beating up of light from beneath when the wash has been a success; but I confess that, for myself, this is everything; and that is the secret of the special admiration which I ever retain for poor Jules Jacquemart, so prematurely snatched away from that resuscitation of water-color, of which he was already the recognized chief. Jacquemart's strength was in the faultless precision of his drawing. He had besides a most definite perception of the model before him, and as in him the craftsman was reinforced with a most æsthetic soul, he never stepped but with certainty, and with foot squarely set down. His aquarelles are all masterpieces, which ought to be at the Louvre and nowhere else.

The more you exercise yourself in water-color, the oftener you meditate on the true cause of your shortcomings, and the more surely you convince yourself of this absolute truth, that the life of aquarelle is simply in ability to design. Almost all the young masters who compose the society are practised designers, of recognized ability, men who may be said to live with the pencil in the hand. I have fallen unexpectedly on my friend Maurice Leloir in the railway coaches, sixty leagues away from Paris. He was drawing on his knees, amidst the jollings of the rolling box — designing the flying landscapes. I know of no other existing means of acquiring that promptness, that precision, which permit a magician of water-color to find the time to set down a scene of





nature between two drops of water dripped out of his brush. A water-color piece, such as I understand it, and such as the members of the Society understand it with me, is a thing that is not retouched. It is similar in this to fresco; when the yard of fresh plaster they have laid for your day's job shall be dry, all is over, there is no going back to it. The sheet of Watman is your little damp wall; you have got to carry off your effect with one sole stroke; what is dry is permanently done.

But I am lingering over these considerations of technic, and forgetting that this book, made by artists, is destined for artists especially, and that they know all this better than I do. Maurice Leloir more than any man has experimented and sub-soiled, explored and discovered in this demesne, which is his property and which he cultivates like a good farmer. His special style associates him, besides, with the inimitable



Little Masters of the last century; he gets from them three things: fancy, a tricky wit, and the sense of order, which is the same as composition. He mingles with these qualities a pungent dose of Gavarni, the guarantee of his Paris origin, and of that caustic good sense which, for him as for his predecessor, can never deceive. 'Tis a conscientious workman, persecuting himself with details, and anxious to originate. I have followed him attentively from his beginnings, and he seems to me to have already conquered for himself one of the first places in that chosen group where his

family name is announced twice on the list. "Taking Possession," in the exhibition of 1882, is his most complete work; I know nothing of its kind more ingenious.

Maurice Leloir was a pupil of his brother Louis Leloir whose severe judgments caused the *débutant* to almost despair. He still remembers a certain horse's skull, [that he drew life size, rubbed out; redrew, destroyed, recommenced dozens of times. By such hard discipline he made rapid progress. Our artist does not forget the time spent with his elder brother, and with touching delicacy he signs himself pupil of his father and brother. Before receiving instruction from such a master he had been taught the

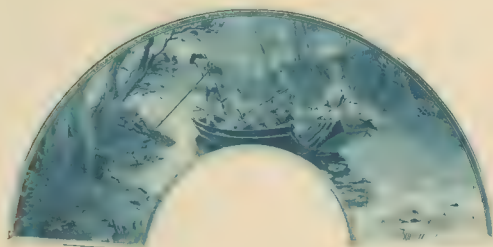


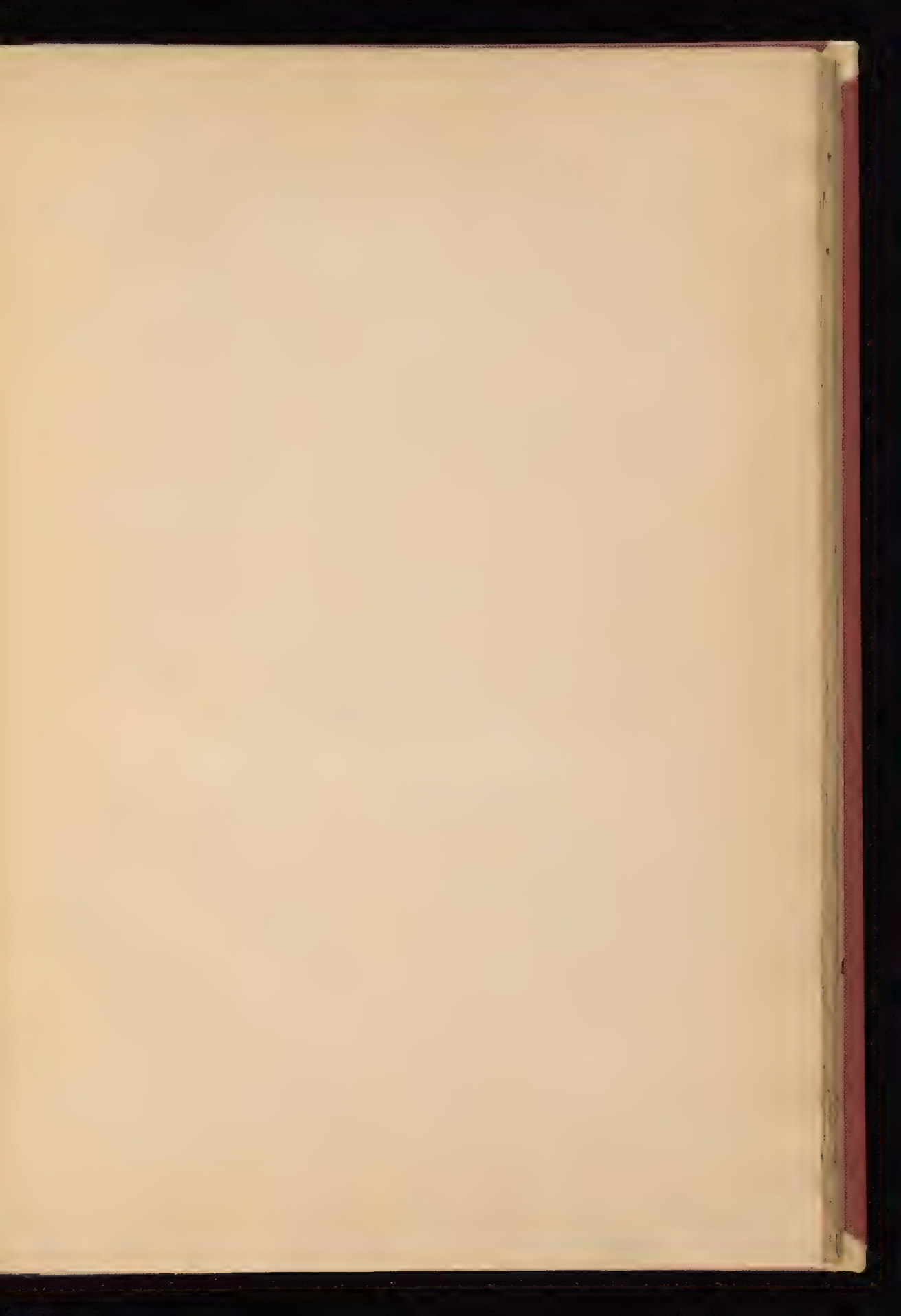
principles of painting by M. Auguste Leloir. The paternal teaching was broad and serious, and in no wise curbed the natural taste of the pupil. At the Salon of 1876 he exhibited the "Marionnettes," a group of babies greatly excited. In the month of May 1877 it was "Robinson Crusoë" on the banks, regarding the approach of the enemy's boats. The following year he exhibited the "Dernier voyage de Voltaire à Paris." The subject was appropriate as the poets' centennial was then being organised. M. de Voltaire is represented as crossing, in a coach, a square in the Marais, acclaimed by the people: the greengrocers, porters, and custom-house clerks. He smilingly salutes them. Above at an hotel window a gentleman and his wife observe the episode. This year of 1882 his picture was entitled the "Dernière Gerbe." The artist relates an old normand custom: The last day of the harvest, the peasant return to their farms singing and dancing. The harvest is ended, "Vive l'été!" Thus they make merry at the end of the summer's labors. The finest and largest sheaf is placed on top of wagon and around are crowded the farm-girls with their bare feet singing choruses of the *pays d'Auge*. In the painter's conception these field customs are very attractive. The peasants have invited the Lord of the Manor to the Gerbe merry making. The Lord with his wife and son are seated at the end of the boat descending the river, two strong lads are plying the oars, some fiddlers, on the prow, are playing the airs of the country. The rustics joyfully lead the way along the banks to the wharf adorned with sheaves of golden grain. These canvases of Maurice Leloir charmed by their amiable and lively aspect. The "Voyage de Voltaire" gained a third class medal. The "Pique-niques" on the grass, and joyous landscapes have but affirmed this success. Maurice Leloir's brush has a wit, a wit slightly tinged with malice, a fascinatingly effective color; tempered by modern melancholy. The artist is personally very agreeable having his father's charming manner. To know him better let us surprise him in his studio, the walks covered with rich stuffs, and *bahuts* filled with old costumes. Here and there Watteau shoes, silver flowered dresses, close coats, knee-breeches and three cornered hats: a real home for a Saint-Aubin. The artist's piquant diction and sparkling manner complete the illusion. You would believe yourself a guest in the atelier of Boucher of Louis XV.'s time and certainly at Boucher's the conversation could not have been more sprightly.

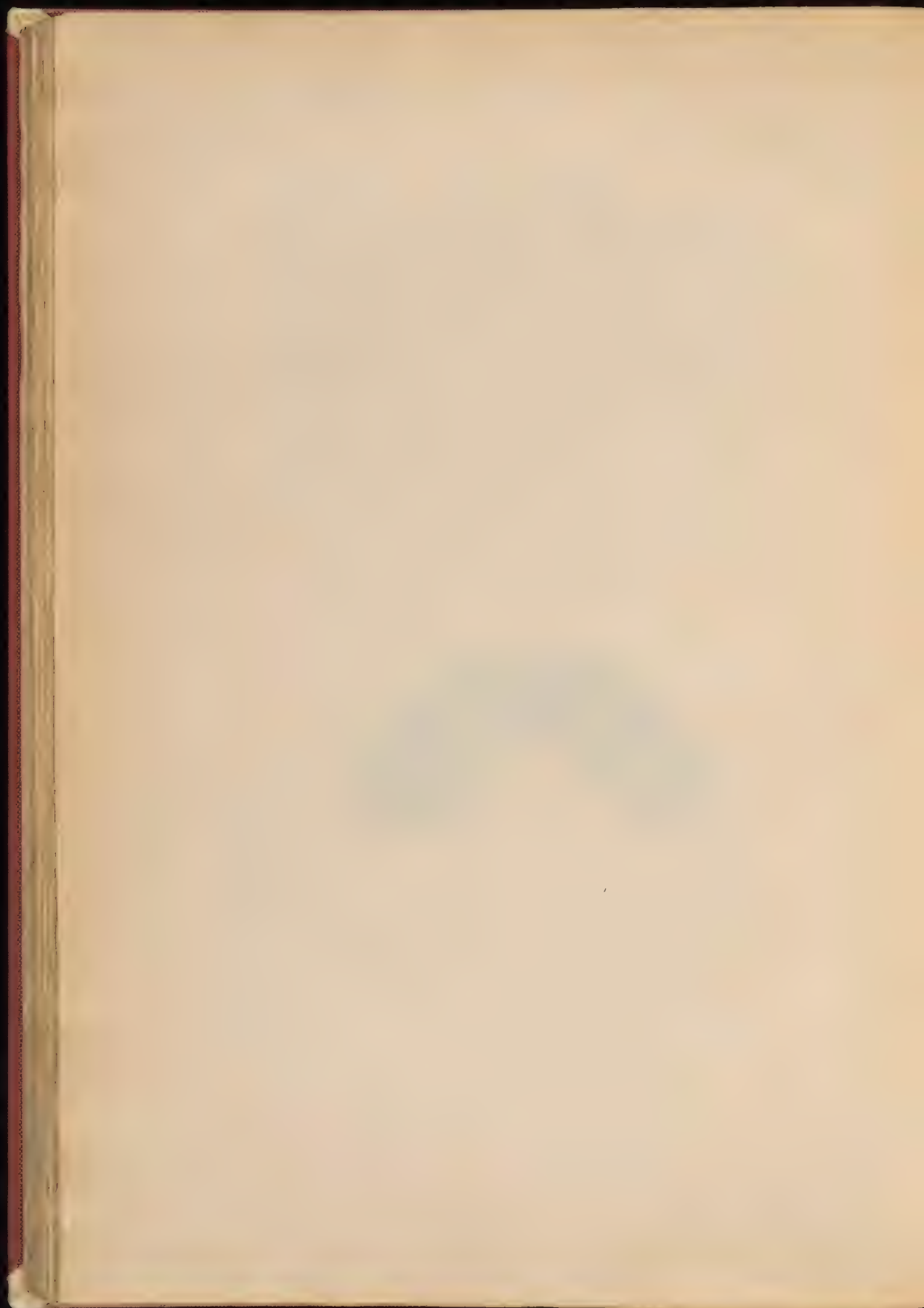
Maurice Leloir is still young. He has a fine career before him, for

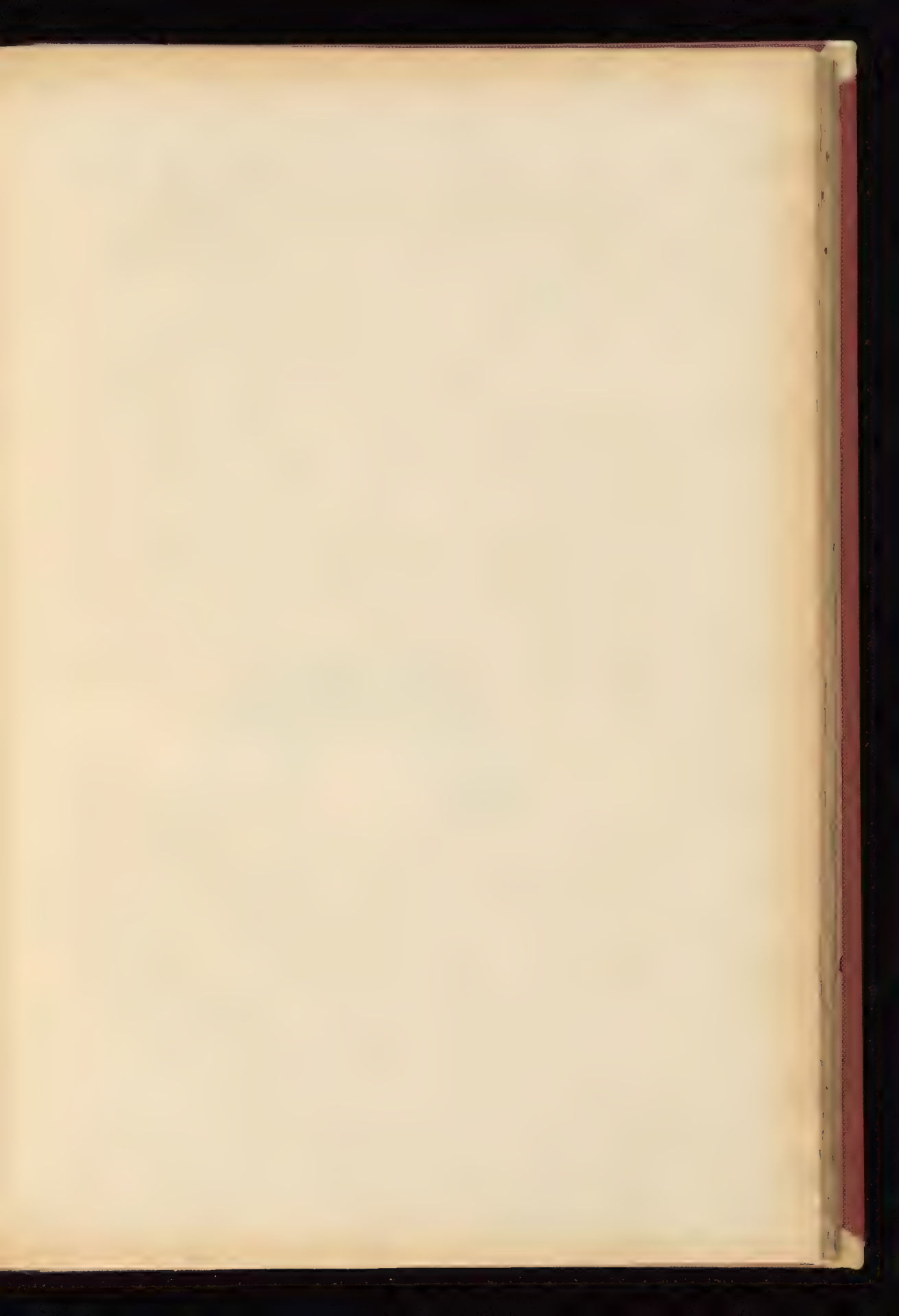
he has got beyond the milestone most difficult to pass, that where individuality begins. He is ridding himself obviously of his first influences; when he shall be completely rid of all traces of conventionality, — that is to say, the theatrical stage-set of a subject, a fondness for illustrative themes, and a certain respect for the old-world affectations now in vogue, he will be a master. As I have no need to send out and announce to him. Then why worry such excellent natural dispositions in order to build up again vanished manners and people? Why fall [so deeply in love with an old-curiosity-shop toy, as to let it lead you on to the research of types, and physiognomies, and customs that are gone? The life of the present time is as good as the past; our women are worth their grandmothers, and dress better than they did. But I am full of faith; by dint of drawing and sketching incessantly after nature, our artist will find his spectacles; in the first place, they are on his own nose.

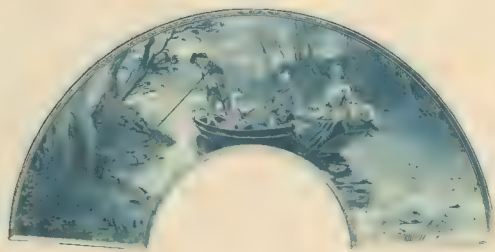
Émile BERGERAT.



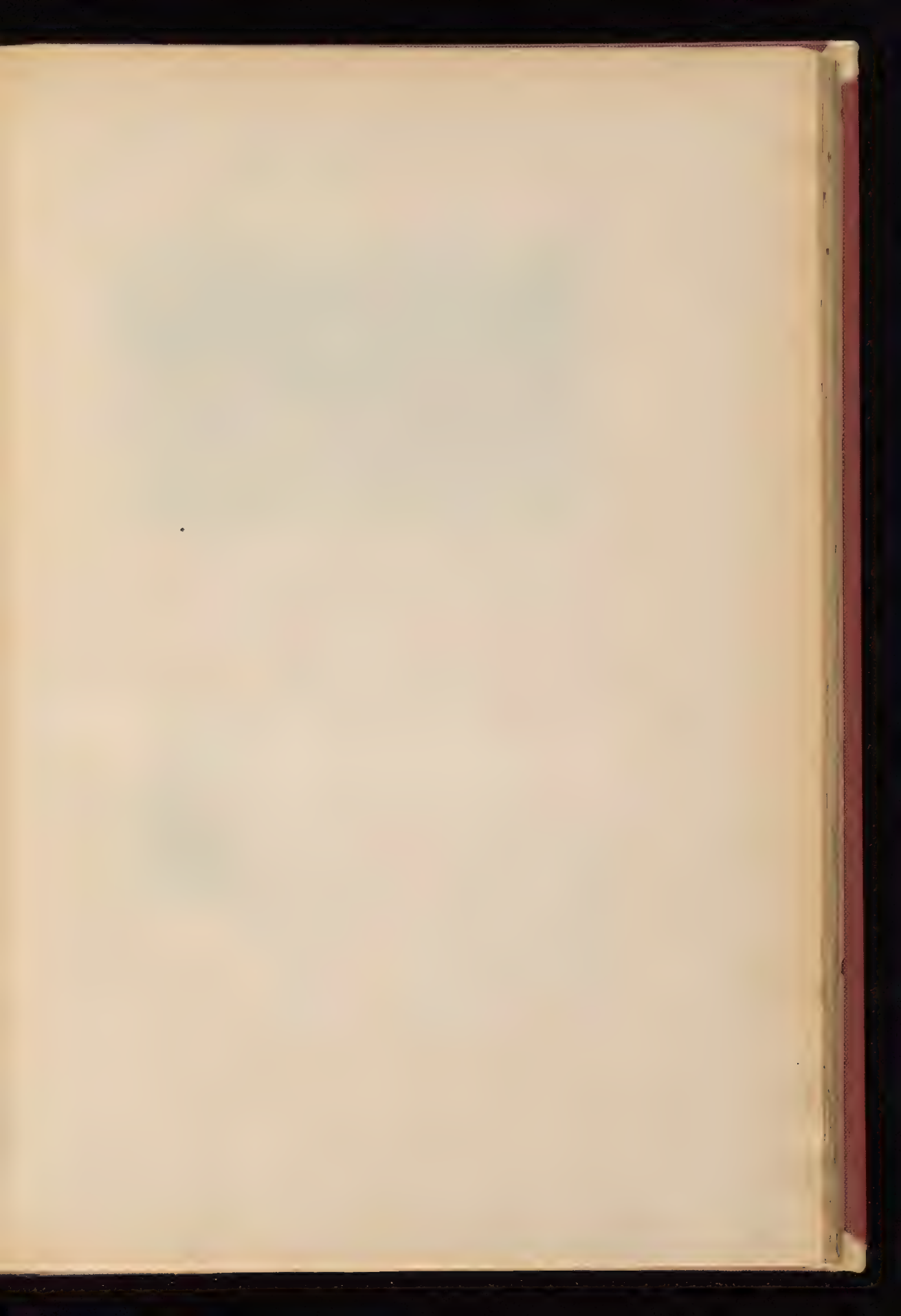


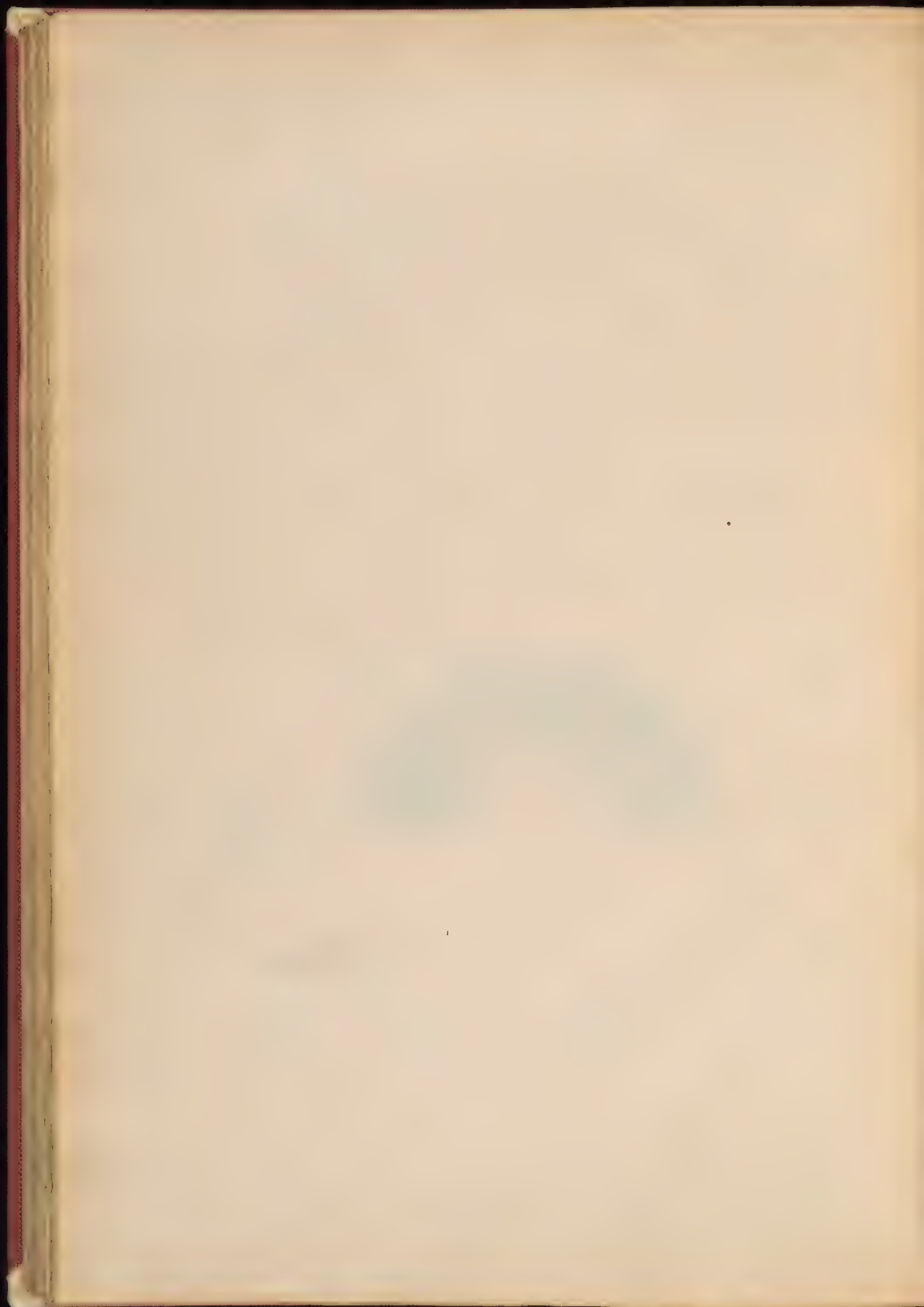
























## JULIEN LE BLANT



A true Parisian, this *Breton bretonnant*, not only a Parisian by birth, but Parisian by his animation, wit and charming grace. At thirty he is already well-known, celebrated and the fashion, having no biography. All his life can be resumed in one word: *work*.

Julien Le Blant was born in 1851 and is one of the youngest of the new generation enamoured with all that is living and new, without meanness and without phrases.

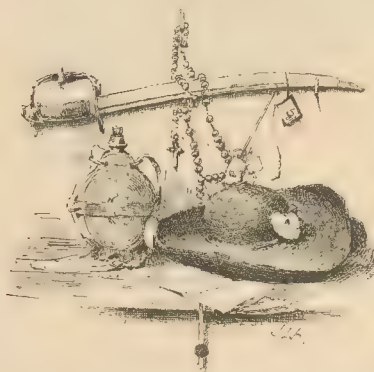
Before he obtained honors for himself he bore an esteemed name, that of a rare *savant*, M. Edmond Le Blant, membre de l'Institut, author of one of the choicest books of the age, *les Inscriptions Chrétiennes de la Gaule*. And as Julien Le Blant was not destined

to be a painter so M. Edmond Le Blant did not commence his career as an archæologist, the future epigraphist was chef de bureau au ministère des Finances, and occupied himself between his administrative labors in studying ancient inscriptions, he published pamphlets filled with learned science, the erudite suffrages and the respect of all transposed him from his bureau; after *Gaule*, the archæologistian *Italie* studied. At Rome where M. Edmond Le Blant searched the catacombs side by side with M. de Rossi, a man that honors a nation, the nation being more honored by him than by noisy politicians and renowned blusterers.

The savant wished his son to be an architect. Julien Le Blant's first studies were made in our old Lycée Bonaparte, then with the Dominicains at Arcueil, and he still remembers the thoughtful but smiling countenance of Père Captier. As child, boy and young man the future painter of the Chouans was always drawing. His copy-books at school, like those of Edouard Detaille, were covered with *bonshommes*, he was born a painter. He studied however, architecture, which did not

please him in the least, during two years he drew and studied with M. Hénard, architect of the city of Paris. His enthusiasm was slight in this work that seemed to him but the mathematics of art. He continued to draw while longing to paint.

For certain active and resolute temperaments the distance is short between the desire and its accomplishment. Julien Le Blant bought brushes and canvases and began painting. He never, it is to be observed, entered an atelier, we might say he never had a master. Only a modest professor, the Père Gérard, a pupil of Ingres, who had not been fortunate, and had an obscure painting class for young ladies, and the most he taught Julien Le Blant was how to place his colors on his palette. The young man, enamoured with his art, made studies upon studies alone at home in the solitude dear to vigorous natures. He learned to paint



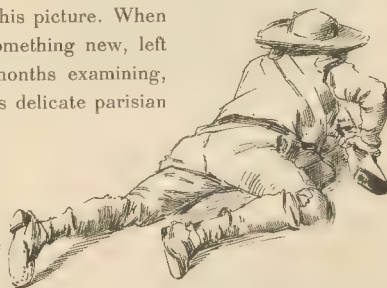
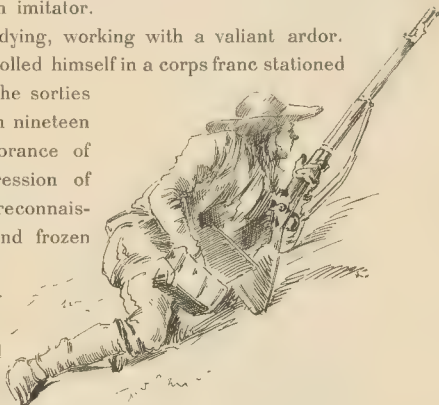
by looking at the pictures of others. Enamoured with pictures when but eighteen years old, he admired all, and it was by this means that he did not become of any an imitator.

1870 found him studying, working with a valiant ardor. At the first defeat he enrolled himself in a corps franc stationed near Paris and between the sorties he painted, he was then nineteen years old. The remembrance of these battles, the impression of those dark days, the reconnaissances across muddy and frozen suburbs, the baggage trains, the smoke of cannonading have remained with him till now, and have since served him though he made no studies not having time, having given up the sketch-book for the chassepot. But by his memory's aid, the powerful and heartrending picturesqueness of war seems as it were to have entered into his pores.

Julien Le Blant made his début at the Salon of 1874, by a genre picture "L'Assassinat de Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau" in a restaurant.

I remember to have noticed this picture. When the young painter, desiring something new, left for Italy, he remained eight months examining, studying and working. For this delicate parisian nature, eager for life and movement, Italy, the vast museum of historic art, was a deception. At Rome he became ill and melancholy. The dust of the past, the ancient stones that

fascinated his father and M. de Rossi overpowered him. He brought back from this trip a picture: "Les Bouviers romains" driving their animals to the door of an inn. It was exhibited in 1875. But he was seeking something different, he felt himself drawn towards a more special, a



more distinctively french art. Raffet, Charlet, the painters of the soldiers every day life, at this time exerted a very great influence on this young painter, one might have chosen worse masters than these kings of lithography, whose works had the frank, heroic, gaulois accent. At the Salon of 1876 Julien Le Blant sent two pictures: "Rassembleurs", sold in London by M. Goupil, and since engraved in the *Magasin Pittoresque*; and "Le



Récit", a lancier recounting some superb charge, like the epic cavalcade of the red lanciers of Somosierra, to two dragoons seated at an inn table. "Le Récit" belongs at present to M. Bertrand, director of the Vaudeville theatre. About the same time, M. Le Blant achieved with remarkable sincerity and animation a series of melodramatic scenes in the style of Charlet, showing in an arbor the familiar soldier, marauding or drinking, as heroic as picturesque, the soldier of the first Empire, growling, then reciting madrigals, passing from Bellona to Bacchus, dipping in thin blue wine his powdered mustache.

At the Salon of 1877, the painter sent "La Partie de Tonneau",



men drinking, studied in a small tavern near *les Invalides*. Then suddenly after a reading of Balzac's *Chouans*, he happily turned his attention towards that land of Brittany that is still identified with its past, and with the frightful but heroic war of the Vendée and Poitou. Julien Le Blant,



after the Chouans read with an eager thirst everything that related to the Vendean battles. The accounts of Crétineau-Joly, the *Mémoires* of Mme de La Rochejacquelein, the books of Pitre-Chevalier with their often very spirited engravings. Pengailly l'Haridon, the soldier that became a painter and that blind, expired in 1870, at the news of the

defeat of France. Thus impressed by his reading, his brain filled with these great phantoms Julien Le Blant started for Brittany, no desillusions awaited him there.

This rocky and melancholy land of superb horizons with its immense strands, its grey toned sea, its moors golden tinted by the broom, with here and there crabbed furze, its fantastic-rooted trees, like those imagined by Yan Dargent, these immense solitudes traversed by lads still wearing the national jacket, their long hair and large features, their *bargaubreiz*, these Celts of other times, this strong, mysterious country, with its Dolmen always standing, the Brittany so truly sung by Brigeux seized more profoundly Julien Le Blant than ruined aqueducts or roman circuses, he felt himself, this parisian, in his chosen country. He went there, drawn as it were by a sort of mysterious vocation. In future he will always be returning.

He brought back a picture: "La Fusillade de d'Elbée," that was his first great success, one of those decisive successes that places an artist and puts him definitely in view. Le Blant was then twenty-seven. M. Paul Mantz hailed him as a young master and the jury gave this canvas a third-class medal. I have seen at Nantes this poignant scene:



Two offensive corps are spread about the ford for the defile of the troupes, in the distance the sea.

Nothing more thrilling than this canvas and far from losing vigor, it has on the contrary gained with time. For a time it was withdrawn from the museum at Nantes because the museum is situated in the Place du Marché at Nantes, one day some

peasants, who had come to sell their produce, and the town's workmen accidentally met in the museum room before this picture d'Elbée shot! the soldier of the Republique, the souvenirs of the *Grande guerre*! It needed no more to provoke a discussion, quickly followed by taunts, the peasants had their big sticks, they fought and in the squabble a *pen-bas* broke a sabre, the next day they took away the picture. Since it has been replaced, but now it has a name. Lately M. Le Blant, in



passing through Nantes, asked the custodian of the museum to show him his picture. Which picture? The painter mentioned the title. "Ah!" said the custodian, "yes! yes! it is the picture of the dispute." They never name it other wise there.

Since his considerable success at the Salon of 1878 M. Le Blant has remained the painter of the *grande guerre* with its ferocities and its greatneses. He has taken to himself this terrible campaign of the Vendée, this picturesque chouannerie.



The models that one meets at Detaille's in the uniform of a chasseur a pied or of the Landwehr, are again to be seen at Le Blant's, with the large hats, scapulaires and long-haired wigs of the Chouans. He

has, I repeat, the innate sense of the furze covered moors and obscure battles that O. Penquilly had translated by his pencil, he has conquered this corner of land and taken possession of this epoch. He has marked this part of France and this fragment of history with his personal mark. He will be imitated without doubt, and since his, there have been many

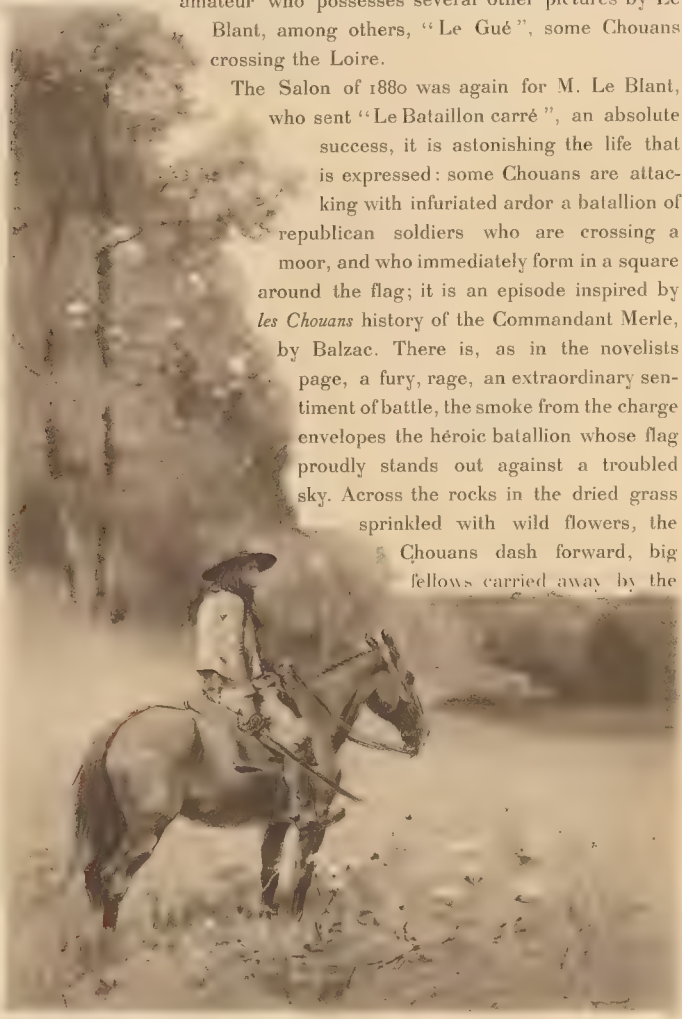


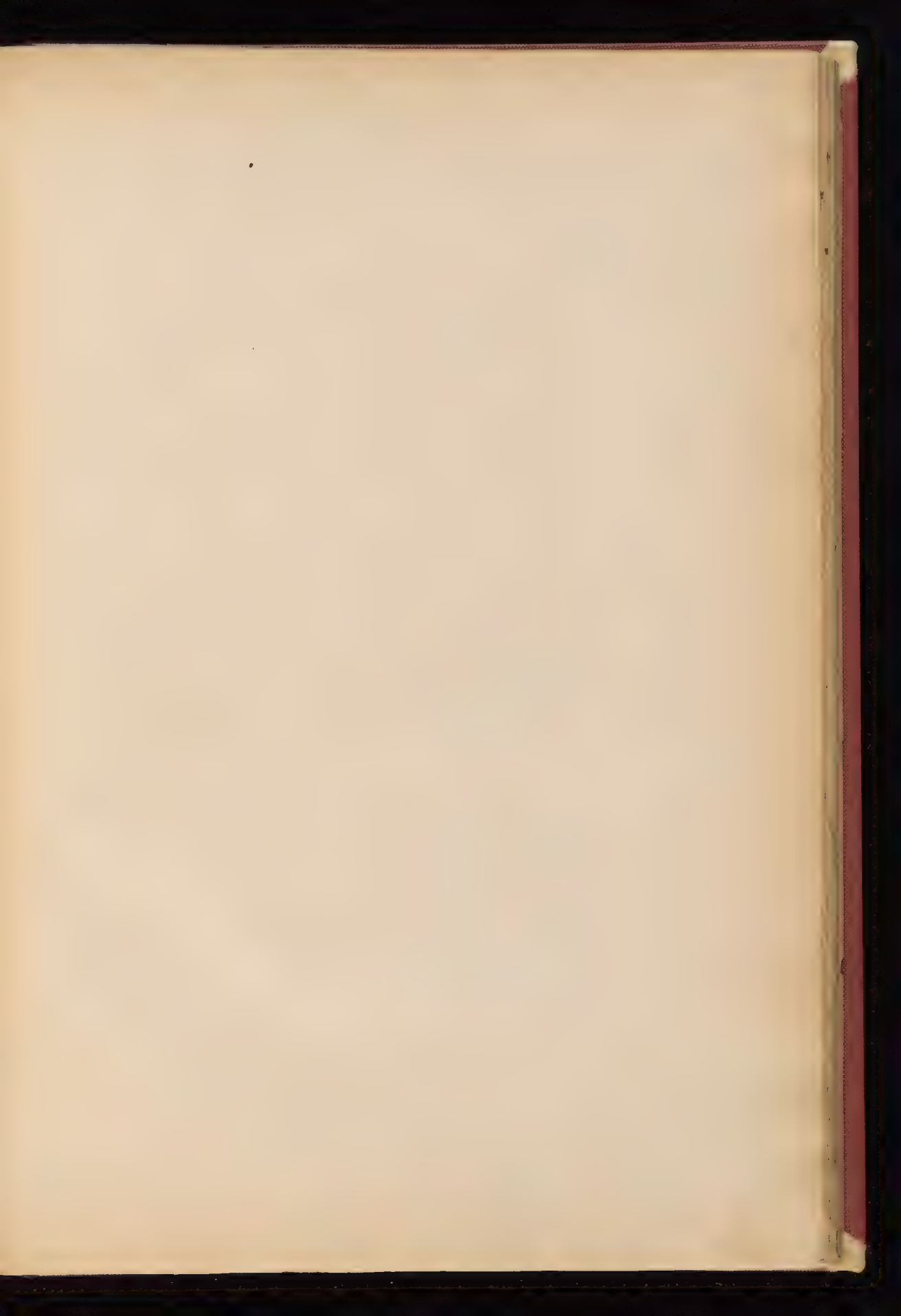
Chouans at the Salon. To-day no sooner has an artist discovered a bit of ground or found a personal note than imitators make their appearance. But none have been able to express with so much youthful vehemence and talent as Le Blant these struggles between the rude Brittany lads and the heroic

Mayençais. In 1879 he sent to the Salon his La Rochejacquelein addressing to his children his famous cry: "Si j'avance, suivez-moi; si je recule, tuez-moi; si je meurs, vengez-moi!" What furious, superb movement there is in this group of ragged soldiers. This picture, purchased by M. Georges Petit, was exhibited at the Cercle de la Presse, it belongs, this detail is to be noted, to the *garçon de jeux* of the club, a well-known

amateur who possesses several other pictures by Le Blant, among others, "Le Gué", some Chouans crossing the Loire.

The Salon of 1880 was again for M. Le Blant, who sent "Le Bataillon carré", an absolute success, it is astonishing the life that is expressed: some Chouans are attacking with infuriated ardor a battalion of republican soldiers who are crossing a moor, and who immediately form in a square around the flag; it is an episode inspired by *les Chouans* history of the Commandant Merle, by Balzac. There is, as in the novelists page, a fury, rage, an extraordinary sentiment of battle, the smoke from the charge envelopes the heroic battalion whose flag proudly stands out against a troubled sky. Across the rocks in the dried grass sprinkled with wild flowers, the Chouans dash forward, big fellows carried away by the





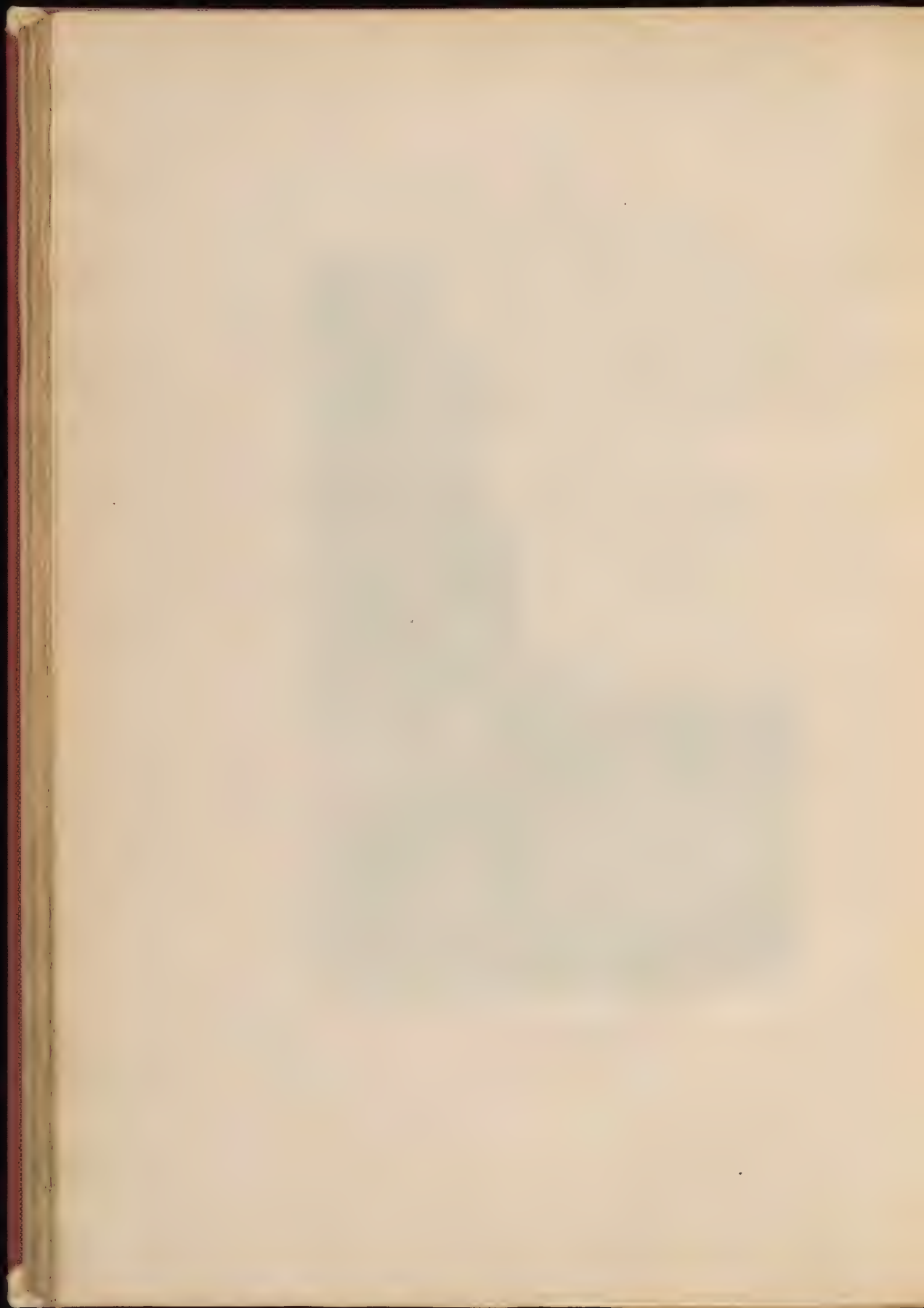






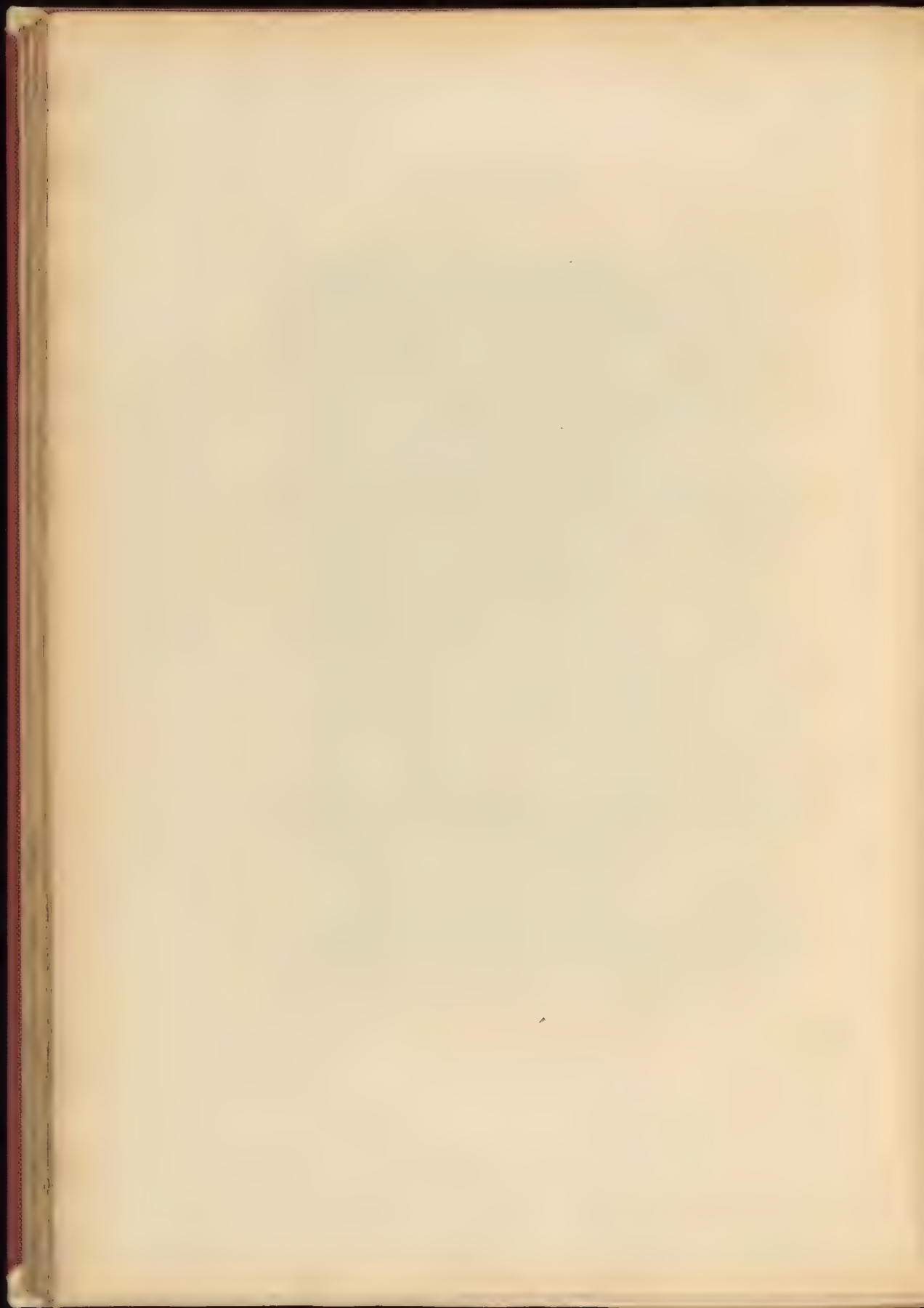


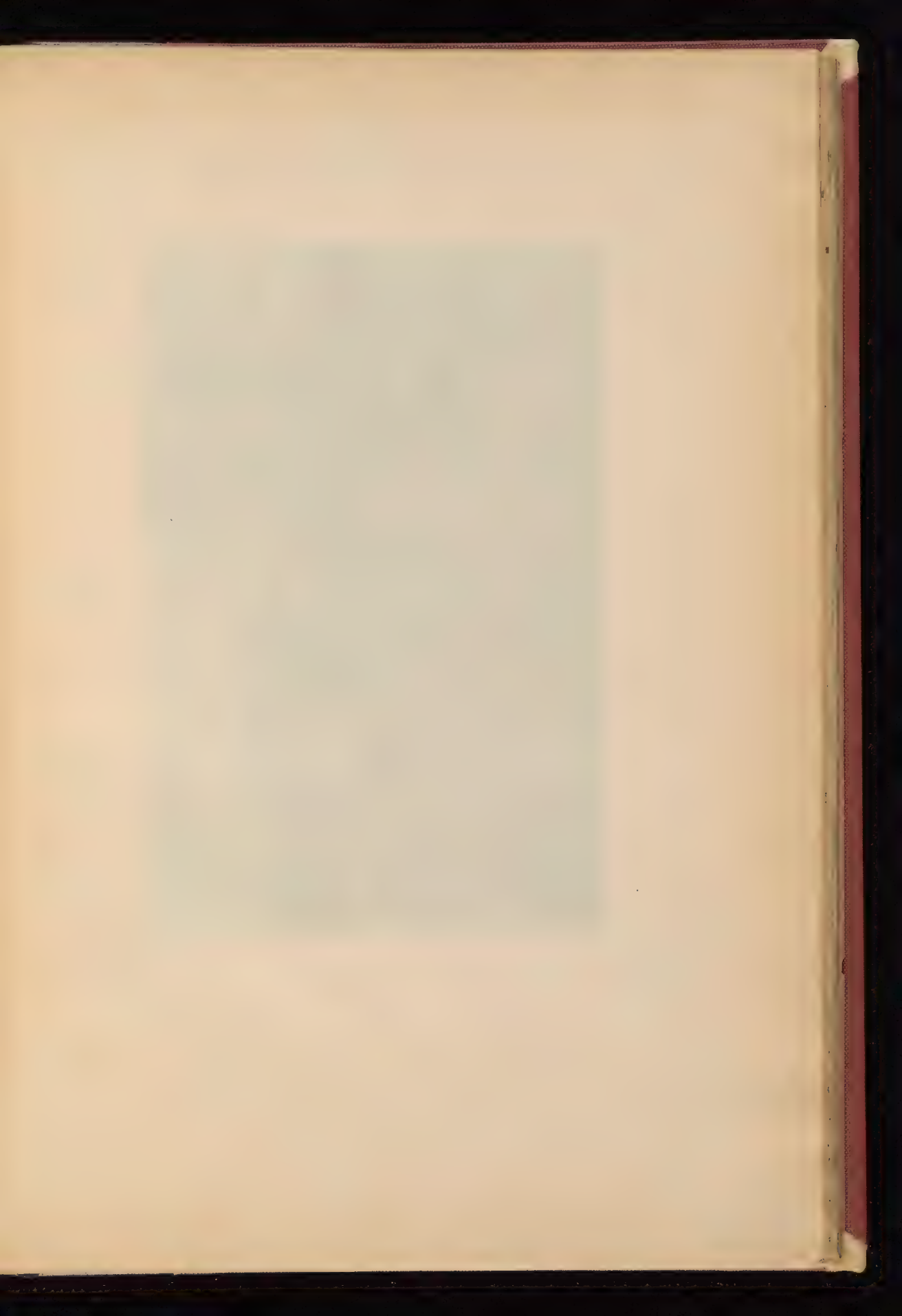


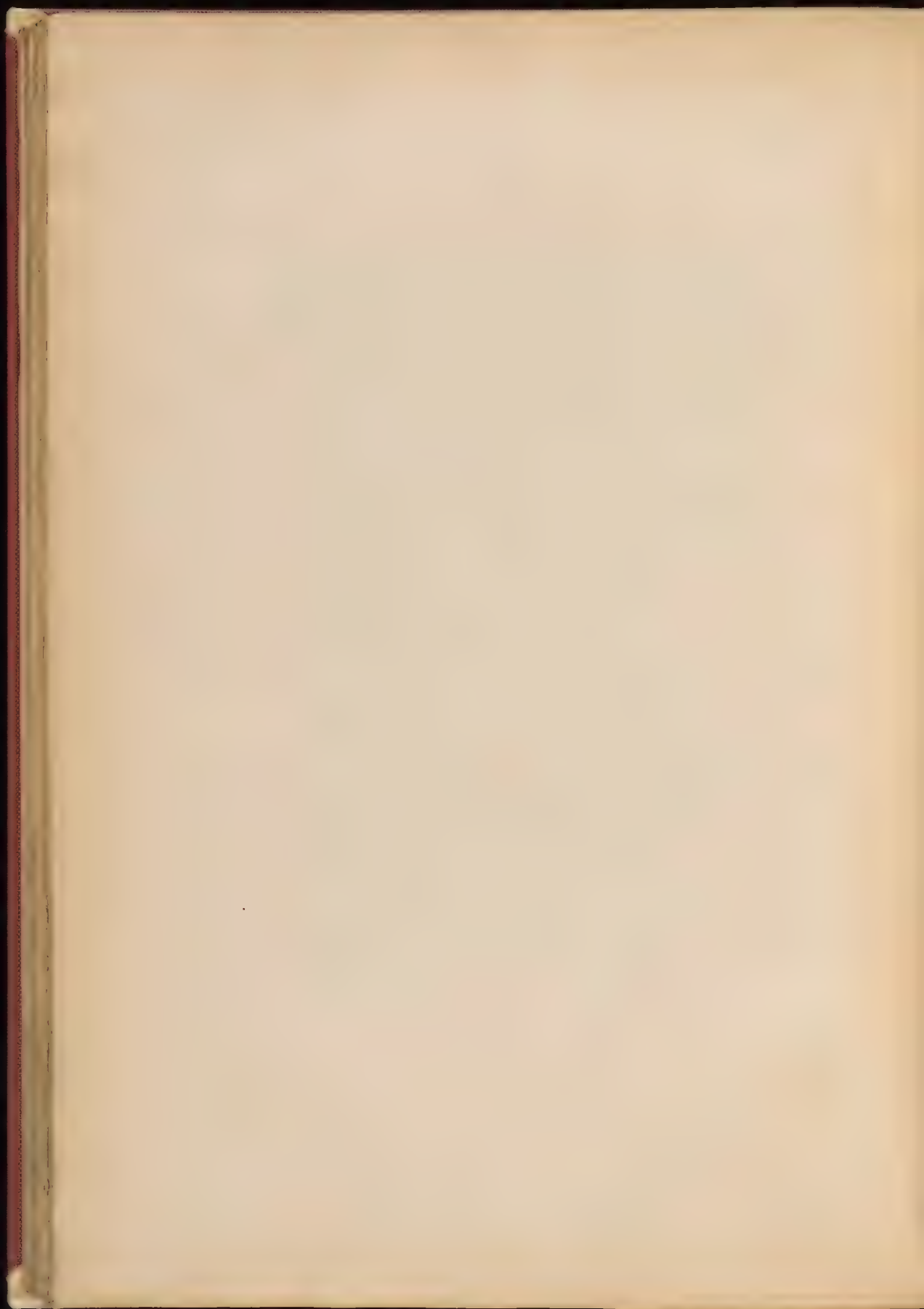




Little Pond

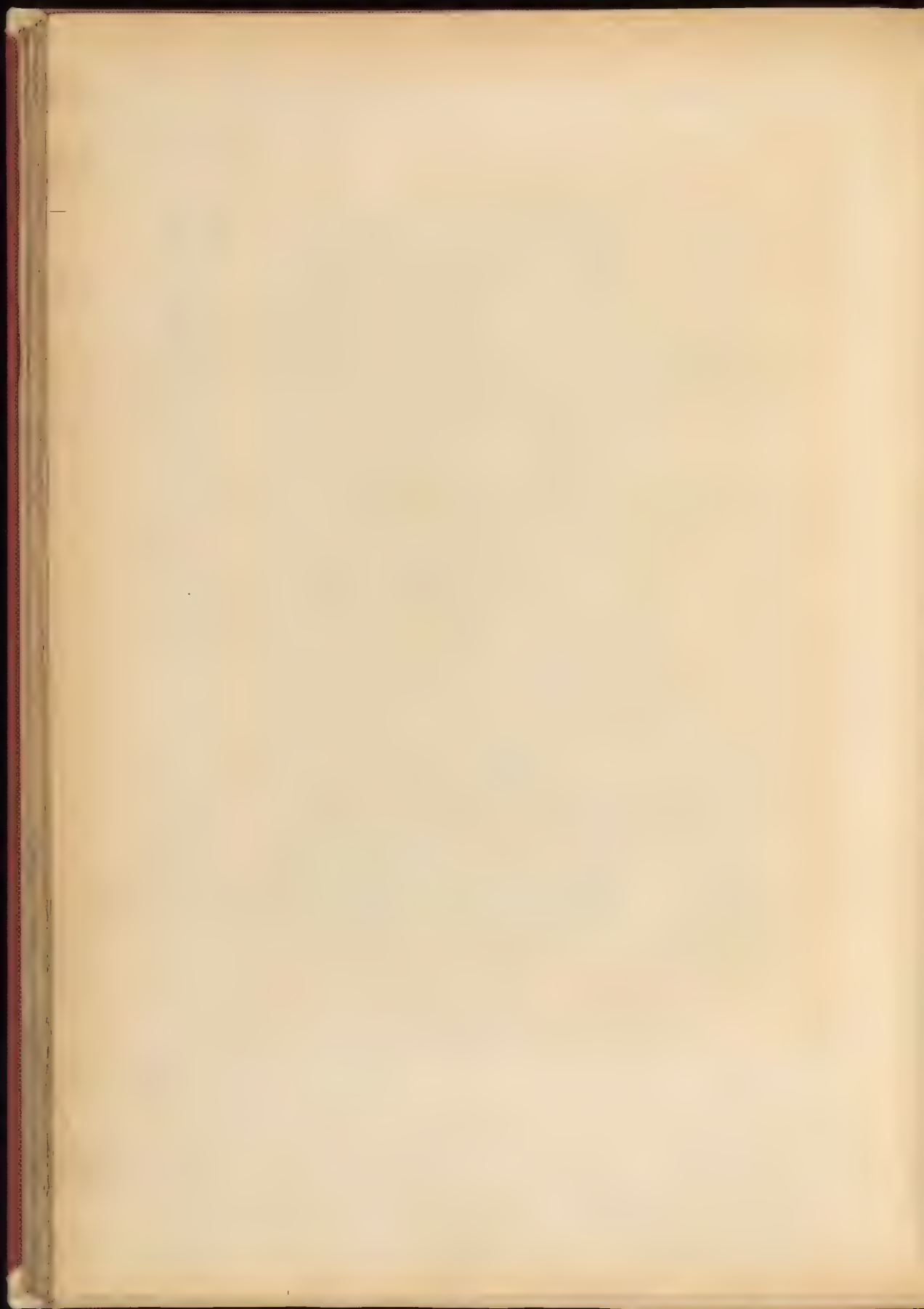












death folly. The drama is thrilling, the painting is excellent, it gained for Le Blant a second-class medal, that places him *hors Concours*.

In 1882 the painter exhibited a picture, the subject was less generally interesting, though it was better painted. It was "Le Courrier". In a powerful and admirably rendered landscape two men have been attacked and assassinated; it was the courier of the Republique, a delegate attacked by Chouans, on the route the broken vehicle and the horses of the offices that were conducting the little yellow vehicle. It contained a rare dramatic sentiment of consummate power, a scene of indubitable ferocity, imagined, without doubt, but the landscape was painted from nature.

Our account of Julien Le Blant, the painter, stops at this last success, but others must not be forgotten in the enumeration of his already considerable works, the pictures he has exhibited at the club exhibitions of the Place Vendôme, that have been perhaps his best: "Le Guide



Breton"; between rocks two files of republican soldiers are passing; and the "Duel" between a *Garde du corps* and a colonel of the Empire, admirable *brigand de la Loire*, standing firmly planted and impassable before his adversary's pistol; this episode of the Restauration again recalls certain pages of Balzac, an epic Philippe Bridaut, the picture belongs to the sculptor M. d'Epinay.

There is in all these paintings of Le Blant as in his water-colors, a truly personal temperament, a first-class draughtsman and a fascinatingly brilliant colorist. He imitates no one and is only inspired by himself. If his work might be said to resemble another's, and that only in the herbage of his water-colors, it would be that of M. Heilbuth, a better choice could not be made as I before said in relation to Charlet. It was M. Heilbuth who was M. Le Blant's *parrain* on his introduction to the *Association des*

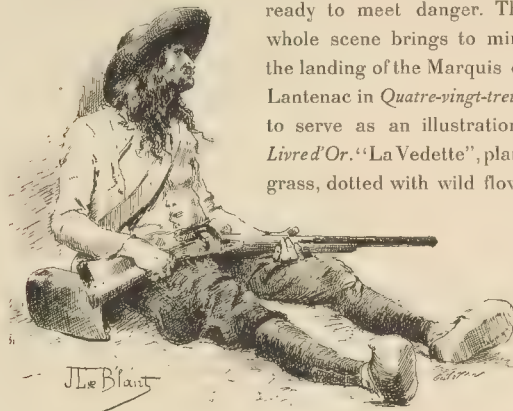
*Aquarellistes Français.* And the water-colors that this young painter of secure and already masterly talent sent to the exhibition of 1882 were absolutely the first that he had produced, he debuted at once in water-colors and among the water-colorists.

The impression made by these works is still remembered. Julien Le Blant had evidently worked upon and caressed the choice bits sent to the rue de Sèze. He had, like his young companions who formerly only obtained this position after having executed what in the profession is called their "chef d'œuvre." Works that were incontestably remarkable, really above par "Soldats républicains conduisant des réfractaires bretons", "La Vedette", "Vendéen à cheval", and "L'Émigré" landing in a terrible storm, accompanied by three stout lads, plunging against the wind, their hats pulled over their foreheads, the bit of sea so luminous with its foam-crested waves under a tragic sky, the beach with the men standing upright

ready to meet danger. The whole scene brings to mind the landing of the Marquis de Lantenac in *Quatre-vingt-treize* and seems ready to serve as an illustration to Victor Hugo's *Livre d'Or*. "La Vedette", planted in the tall green grass, dotted with wild flowers, with his large spreading breeches and the haughty air of some gallic cavalier of the old *Gallia braccata*.

As to the "Réfractaires," of

whom we have a back view, they are escorting a detachment of *fantassins* wearing grenadiers' felt hats or the *casques* of the "Chasseurs de l'Armée de la République"; this group of ragged men dragged by the band who gaze with touching pity at the two very pretty poor women. I cannot too highly



praise the composition, so curious, so natural, unhackneyed, really *trouvée*. And the landscape is absolutely true to nature.

I have seen again and again Julien Le Blant's backgrounds, they have the same peculiar zest as his genre scenes or his historical episodes. Such melancholy and penetrating intensity, often like the land of Armorique that charms by the constantly renewed wild flowers that pervade its grasses.

During a trip through Brittany along the long Morbihan roads, in the sheltered lands of Finis-terre they seemed to appear to me, long-haired, thin, pensive, ragged, silent and superb with their tall, robust silhouettes, these Chouans with their faces stained like an Aragonais' skin, with their naturally sculptural poses like an Arab's attitude. Le Blant animates and makes them act real contests, he translates with his brush the epopee of distant battles and the intimacy of every day life, as of old the painters Farlin or Guillemin but with quite another freedom in the execution. He is now painting a "Sorcier breton"



and is preparing an historical picture; the thrilling history—vividly portrayed as if it were the actual scene,—of the execution of Charette on the place at Nantes, with its dreary sky reflected in puddles. These two new pictures characterise by themselves the artist's talent, the complete intimacy and the rarest dramatic power.

Le Blant has given us something new in pictures of Brittany, before him we have had the people at their *fêtes* and *pardons*, and the paintings of interiors of the brittany thatched roof cottages are as common in Paris as the originals are in Finis-terre. Breton has given us the tender and strangely poetic side of the country with the groups of peasants dancing, on the eve



of Saint-John, round the festal fire that lights up the faces of the dancers while the tender crescent moon throws a tender glow over the distant landscape. And again under the same poetical moon he has painted the love-making in the picturesque lanes and the peaceful processions under the mid-day sun.

Leroux's picture that hangs in the Luxembourg palace is one of the best and is typical of the class of breton picture that we have become familiar with during the last twenty years, and represents an interior with the curious furniture of the country while comfortably lying in the bed is the mother of the family, a little pale for a peasant with her eyes turned upon a sleeping infant in the cradle perched upon the chest beside the bed that is rocked by the father seated beside it, evidently very sleepy but filled with pride. For he is relieving, for a time, the grandmother of the new born who is at present searching in the old linen chest for something, probably for the infants wants.

Breton's pictures represent the penitent rather than the soldier element, they treat of the modern *Bretons* these we see, if we are happy enough to possess poetical in eyes, in travelling through this country or assisting at their pardons or rural festivals. Travellers without this happy faculty of seeing the picturesque side of this peculiar people, only find a backward sad race and do not discover what poets and painters have found in this strange people.

But Le Blant has brought us into a new atmosphere and until shown by him we must admit the history of our France had not been seen under this peculiar light, the lands of Brittany, the fords of the Loire,





the gloomy market place of Auray, the beach of Quiberon had had their romantic painters but not the admirable interpreter, reproducing the past in a frame of to-day thus animating the dead form of legend and history. Julien Le Blant has discovered and opened a new class of subjects for those who are searching what they shall do, after him the copyists the profiteurs of success, the everlasting recommencers, the almost anonymous flock of imitators, but the author of "Elbée" and the "Bataillon Carré", remains master in this domain, they cannot dislodge from their enclosures and barracks, these companions of Jean Chouan or the soldiers of Kléber. That which pleases us in Le Blant, that which is the charm of his paintings, the strength of his talent, the grace of his temperament, action, inconsiderate, intelligent, consummate as well as pensive, vibrating with modern emotions

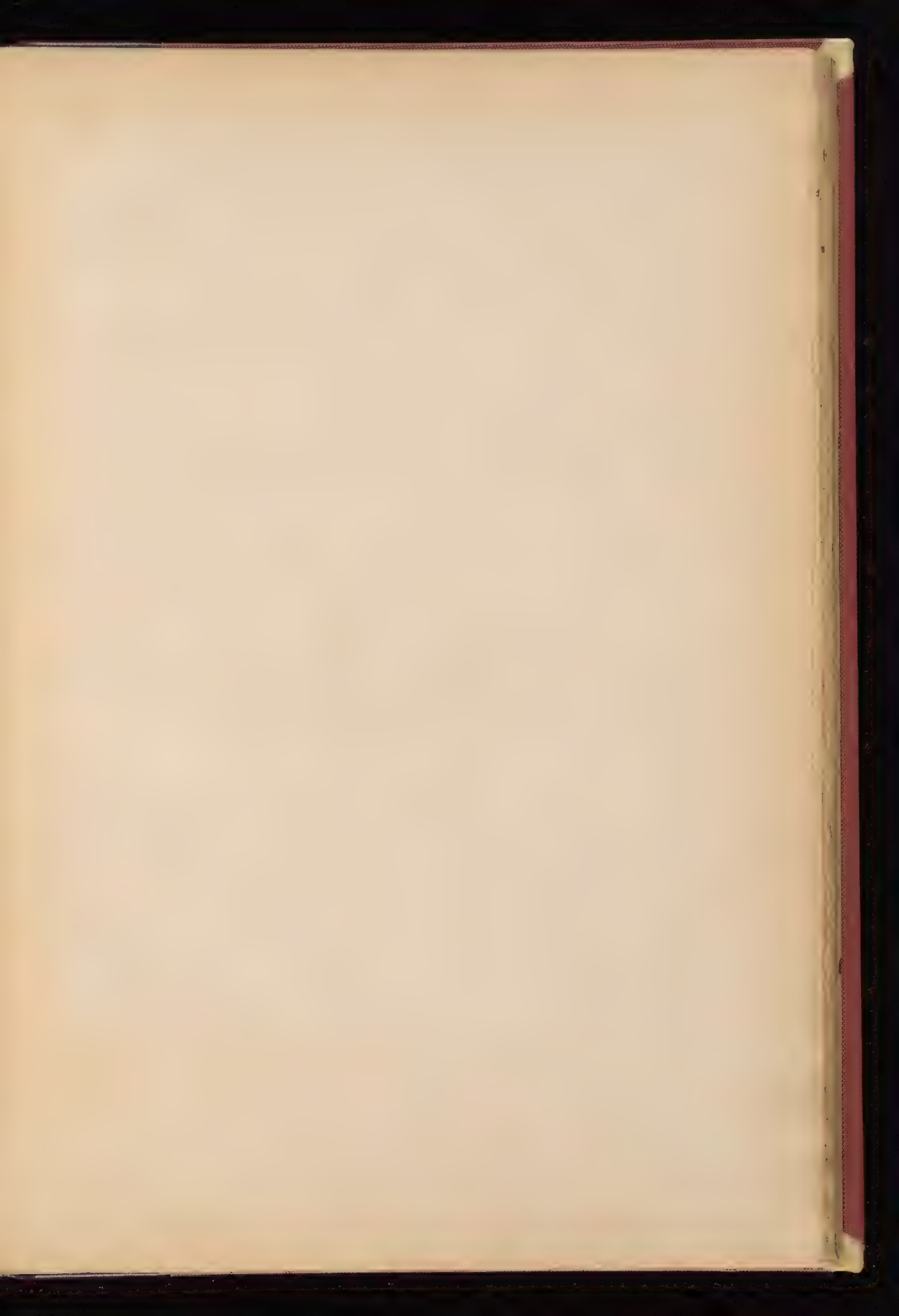


and singularly comprehensive of the deeds of other times, is the force of this personality at once solid and elegant, is his faculty, brio and healthiness in the execution. Here then is nothing strained, we feel that the painter has the quality that surpasses all others : *le don*. He was born to be a painter as I have said, and never has had any trouble in becoming a painter. Inspiration quickened at the same time his fingers and brains. He does not halt before his canvass, he carries his pictures with the joyous alacrity of his soldiers charging with the bayonet. We welcome in art all that is spontaneous or that seems to be produced with pleasure, works easily achieved have the smile and charm of a pretty woman. All affected thought, and tortured works are condemned in advance to sterility and precocious decrepitude. A word that paints admirably,

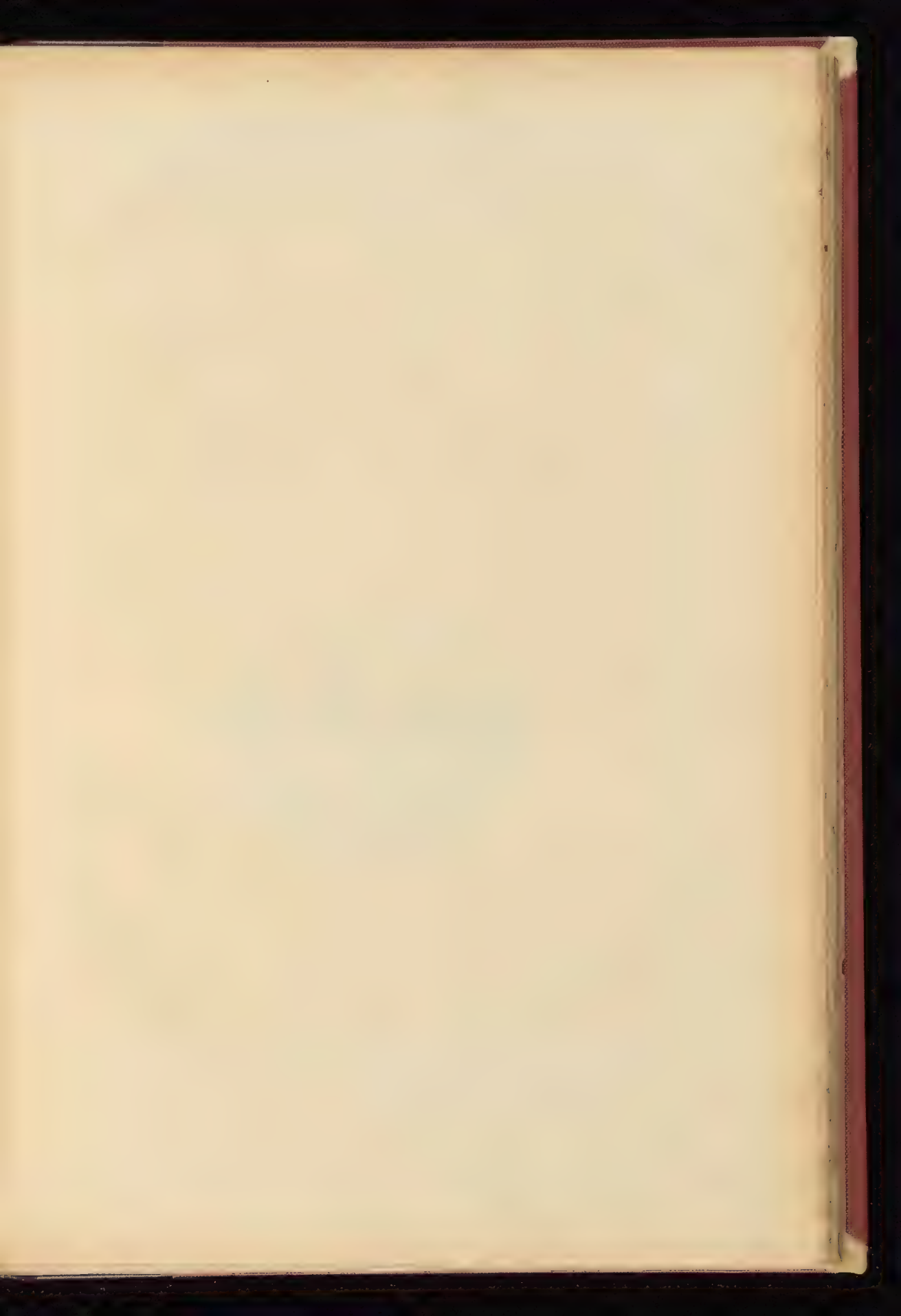
an eloquent eulogy of the healthfulness and vigor in art, is the cry, that was a confession of Dumas père: "*Ce que je fais est amusant, cela tient à ce que je me porte bien.*" I would readily affirm, if I did not fear a play of words, or if I were writing of a literary work that the talent of Julien Le Blant *ne sent pas l'huile*. It is healthy and has the charm of being elegant, robust and amiable. There is a precision in all the details and a largeness in the entire work that is always composed, in fact, these productions are all art. Ah! to find a more comprehensive definition, I should be obliged to search laboriously. It is given by his works and also by his origin: They have all the poetry of Brittany, with the vivacity of Paris.

JULES CLARETIE.



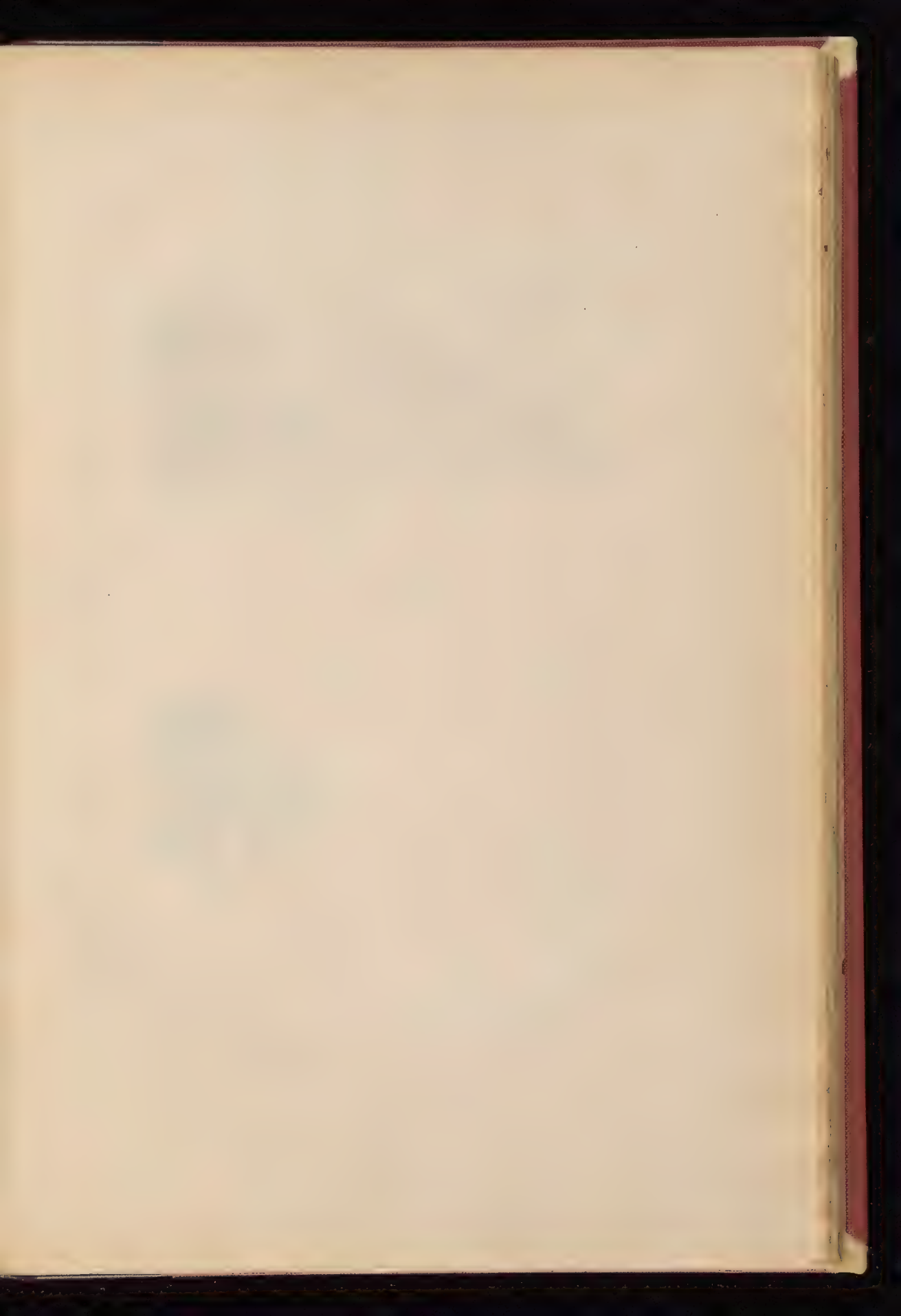


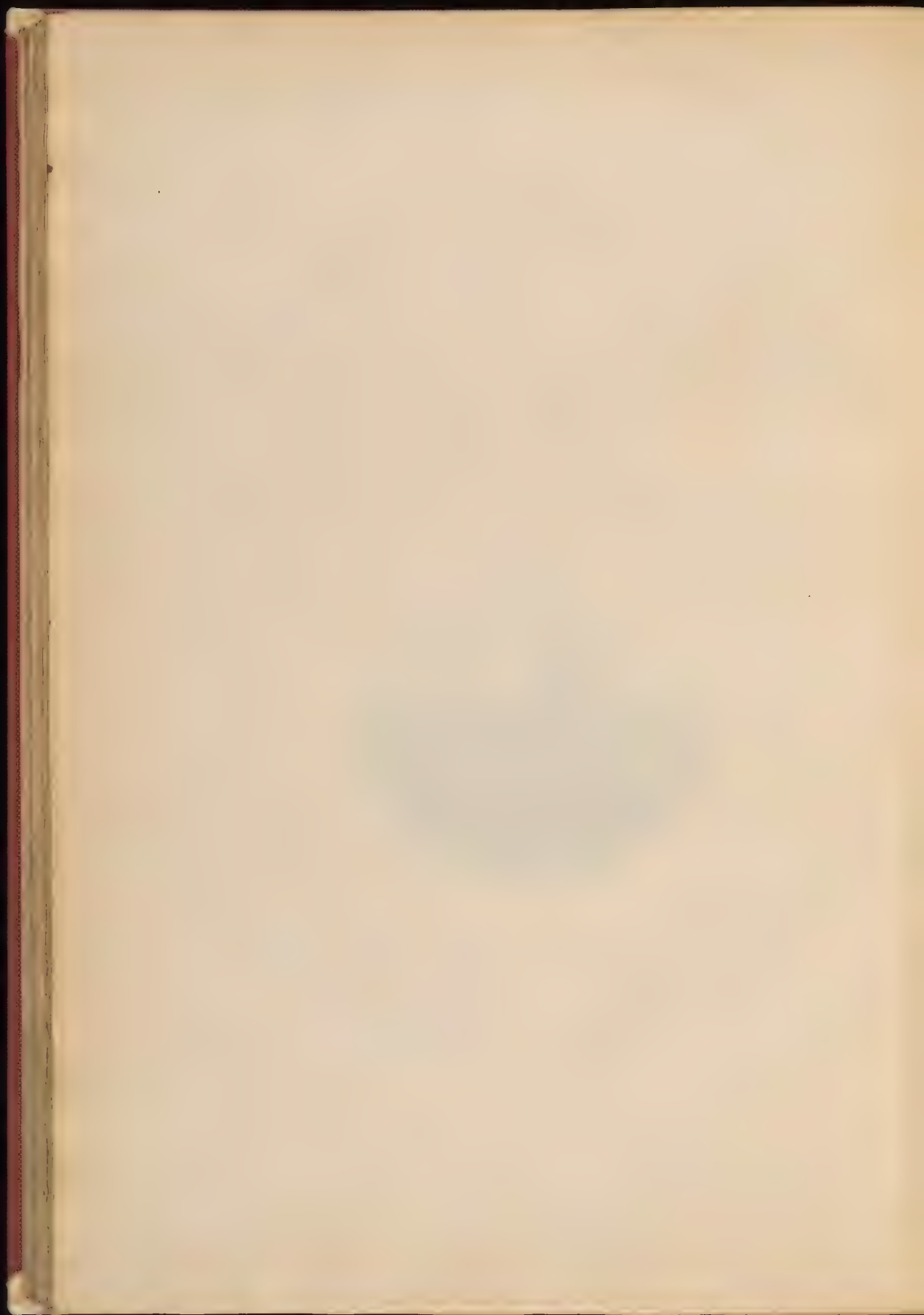




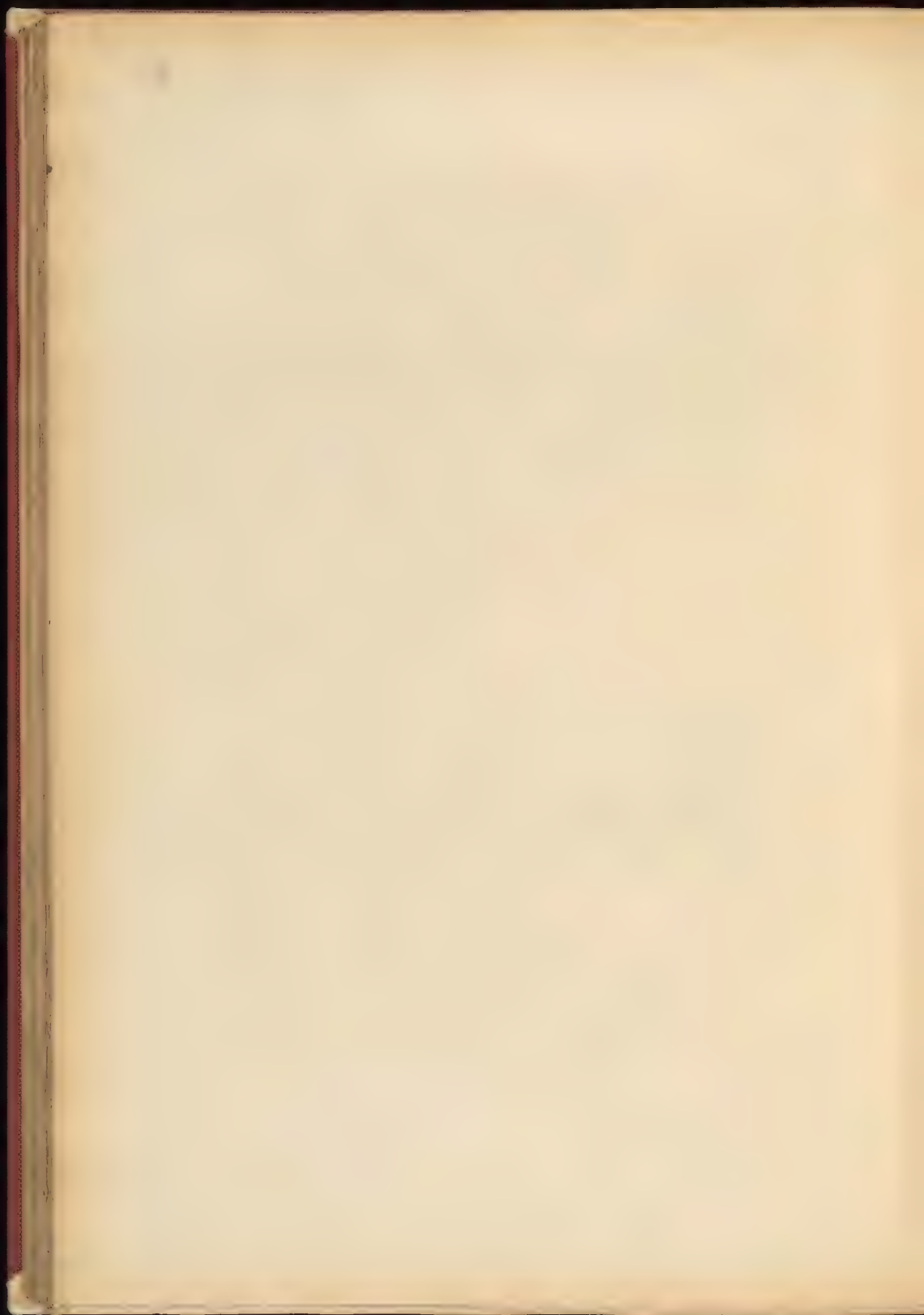


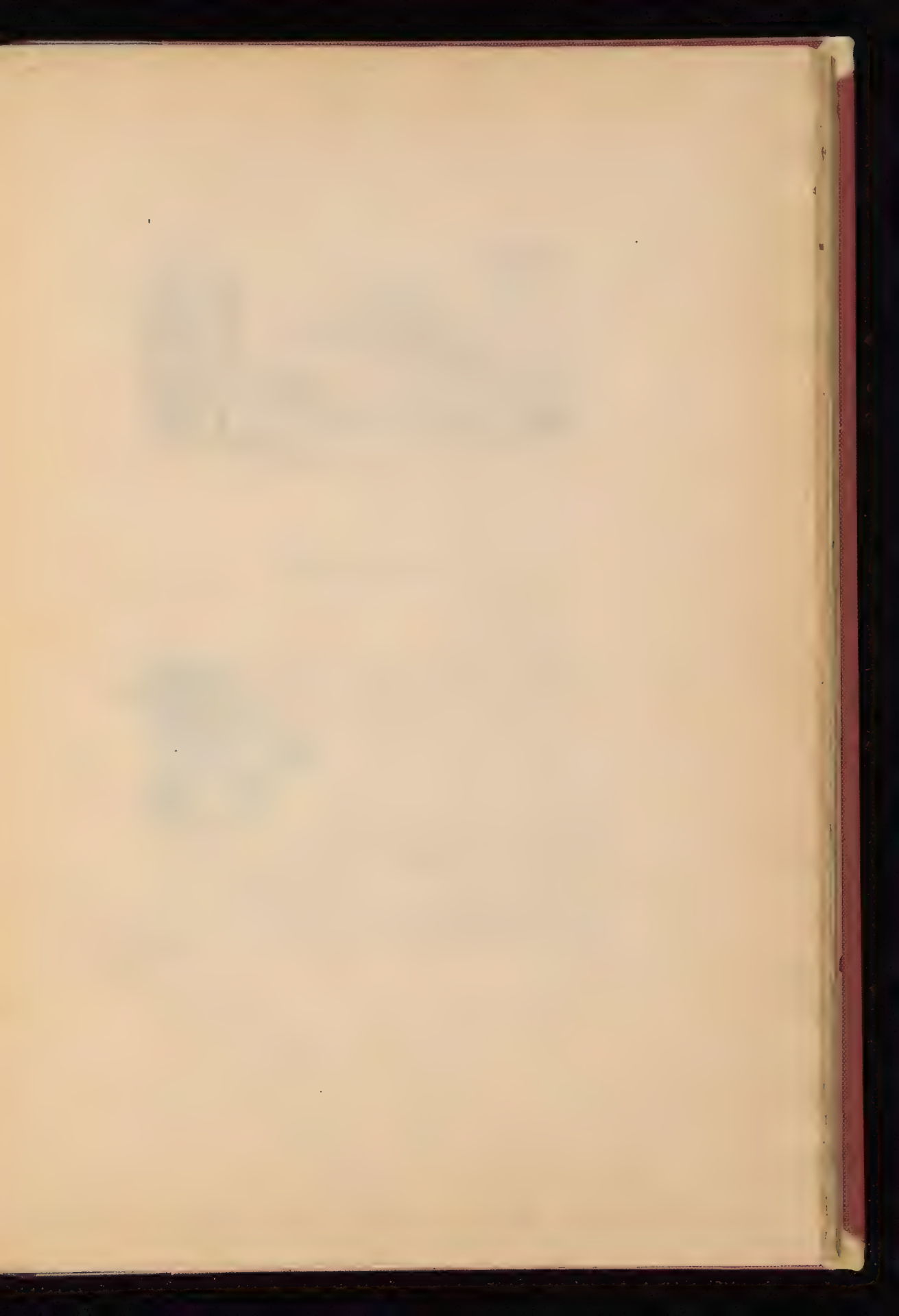


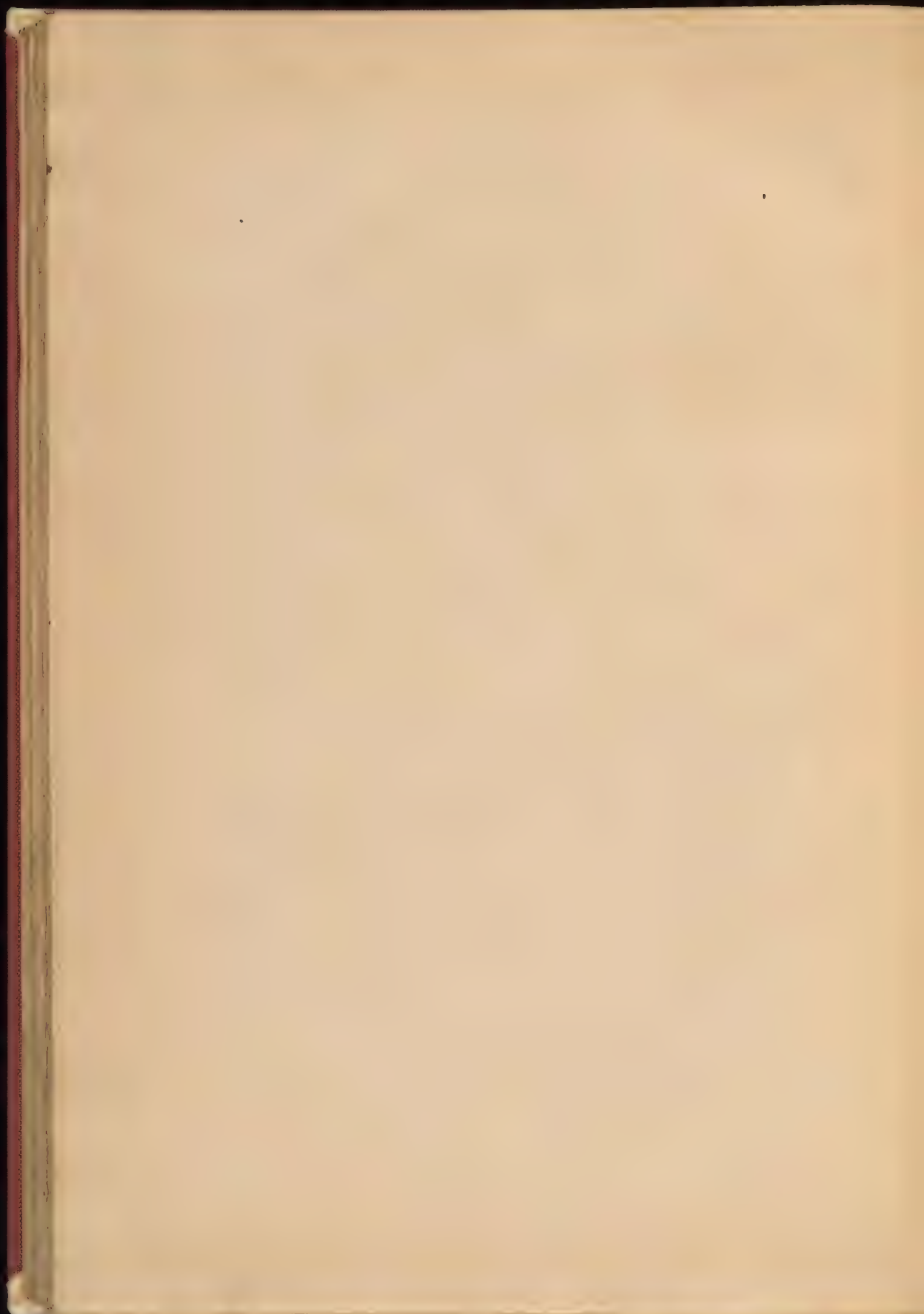








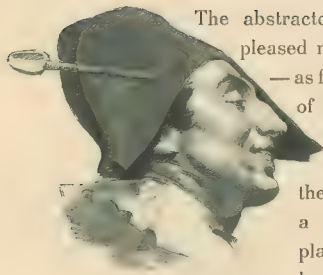








## JULES WORMS



The abstractors of heridity quintessence have always pleased me, and I take great pleasure in following — as far as has been possible — the developements of their system in explaining a painter or a poet's character and work. When Théophile Gautier's beautiful soul returned to God, the psychologists of this school exclaimed that a son of the Orient was dead. The sweet placidity of the author of *Émaux et Camées*, his love of ease, the olympian indolence of his thick mask had seemed to them, indiscutable indications of his eastern origin.

By a sort of metempsychosis the unruly offspring of a Montauban cloth-dealer could but be some dervise contemporary of Brahma, or an old Mysore poet strayed into our modern world. Without ever visiting the

country of pagodas, without ever having his eyes brightened by the ardent rays of the Gange's sun he ignored nothing in their brilliant past. All his former dreams were mysteriously condensed in his definite being, superb developement of a secular inheritance.

It is thus that they analyze and take to pieces his poems his sparkling fancies, his opulent and prolific imagination. Vichnou by distant procurement had engendered our harmonious and endearing poet. Was not



Paul de Saint-Victor equally a companion of Alcibiades exiled to this XIX century who seemed to regret Agora, and the gardens of Academus and the Propyleas? By extending this poetic, if neither serious or severe system, they have often tried to establish between the work, in character and physiognomy, and its creator an intimate correlation. This ingenious occupation has often given rise to the most piquant comparisons, at the same time the most eccentric contrasts. Without doubt prominent examples can be cited to prove the value of this system, among others may be mentioned Rubens, Van Dyck, of whose

spirited manner, the overflowing youthfulness and life of their temperaments and physiognomies seemed to have served as models in the types they created and to have reflected themselves in their original and vigorous work. A Flandrin who carried his ardent faith, his candor and gentle ascetism into his religious compositions. A Henri Regnault whose ardent blood and youthful enthusiasm impelled him, on his leaving the Fine Arts school, towards western Africa and moorish Spain. If but once seen, how easily recalled is that vigorous and superb head covered with masses of black hair, that bronzed face with its quivering nostrils, the voluptuously formed mouth and peircing eyes from which an eagle's glance darted, that glance of which his father smilingly remarked: "I am afraid when the child looks at our porcelaines, I fear they may crack." This is indeed the fancied

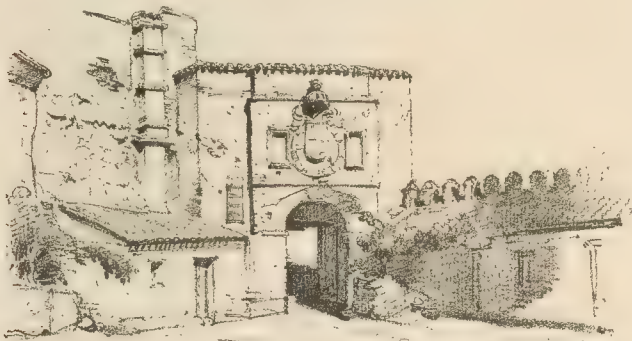
physiognomy of the artist who was to paint "Salomé," the "Général Prim," and the bloody "Exécution à Tanger." But for a few analogies of this kind what antithesis this sort of comparative study reveals. When the Muse touches, with her chaste tips, a man to make him an artist does she trouble about his good looks more than Marguerite de Navarre did, when she kissed the forehead of the sleeping poet, Allain Chartier. I thought of all this in writing these lines on M. Jules Worms.

Without any doubt an artist who has painted with so much spirit and truth the manners, physiognomy and costumes of Spain should, at least, be a little Spanish if only on account of the before mentioned system of heredity, if he has not already lived in the times of Miguel Cervantès or of Cid Campeador, upon the banks of some dried Mançanarès. Or what did I learn? This painter of the bachelors of Salamanque, of toreros and manolas is nothing less than a son of Navarre, Catalogne or Andalousie; if Théophile Gautier remembered exactly



to have made his ablutions in the sacred waters of the Indus. M. Worms does not know that he has waged war with the Moors or in the troops of Pierre d'Aragon. He was born in Paris and his appearance does not reveal any of the popular or particular characteristics of the race from which he borrows to-day almost exclusively the types for his pictures. It was not, as it was with Henri Regnault and Giraud, drawn by an irresistible attraction that he adopted Spain, as his second artistic country. His passion for things and men beyond the Pyrenees was not the first love of his youth; I may say without wounding, I hope his delicacy or self respect, that he has made with Spain only a marriage of reason. For these marriages are not always the worst or the least fruitful. He does not love her less to-day, and remains true to her. When I think of Spain,

of the artists who have painted her, my thoughts turn instinctively towards Henri Regnault who loved her so ardently, go back and reread his letters, so full of expansive and glowing enthusiasm, that he wrote to his friends from there, giving his impression in face of that bright sky, that nature bursting with light. "This country is superb, it is Africa, Egypt. Barren lands of marvellous color and form, a dazzling light, mountains outlined in a wild and imposing style." Later he writes of the Alhambra that captivates, enraptures and plunges him in ecstasies: "What fairyland! how wonderful! we find it difficult to represent the rosy light that fills this enchanted palace and the golden reflections in the shadows... I was for several days unable to work, I saw nothing but fire. This dazzling light,



this Moorish art was to me completely unknown." Regnault with his violent temperament and youthful ardor, had seen the luminous, fervid Spain. He loved the lapis tones in her sky, her fiery sun, golden burnished monuments where the scintillating light blazed forth on the marbles, the azuleas, the enameled faiences, upon the old oriental carpets, the greenish brasses and bronzes. In the midst of this enchanting setting he sketched, in his poetic and artistic imagination, Moors and Sarrasins in their shining armors and their purple and golden garments. He was intoxicated with the color and the sunlight. It was, if we may so express it, epic nature, nature in all the elevation of its greatness and power, that he painted under this luminous vibration. Eugène Giraud did not experience the same sensations. The nature having less acutely impressed him, it was from the whimsical and



tumultuous crowds of *corridas* and *tertullias* that he demanded the elements of his inspiration. This art has not the same resplendency nor audacity. Gustave Doré has passed by here with his brilliant fancies, his capricious poetic imagination, he sought and found the Spain of the *romanceros*, of swathy visaged gitanos with picturesque rags and giralas that raised their outlines against the sky. The fortune teller of l'Albacyn, the picaresque beggars squatting at the doors of the Burgos Cathedral, bronzed legged *rateros* and *muchachos* that shiveringly followed the diligencies and tourists interested him more intensely than the golden sunlight, the wild horizons of Andalousie, the rose and amethyst lacework, silvered stalactites of the fairy palaces of Alcazar and Alhambra or the Cordoue Mosques.



Castellón de la Plana  
1865

J. Worms

M. Jules Worms has painted another Spain. The Spain of novias, manolas, escopeteros, of barbers and muleteers. The Spain that laughs, sings, dances and makes love, whose picturesque setting is the court of an old catalognian *posado*, the narrow arena of a rural *corrida*, some smoky drinking shop, a gaping balcony through whose broken bars lovers are embracing, a street corner convenient for languishing serenades. He desired to be a painter of genre intime, his ambition limited itself to this intimate style, but in a country where the manners, habits, and traditions have produced such extraordinary diversity and variety in the dress and character, the field to explore which, at first sight, seemed limited is really vast and fertile.

When M. Worms first visited Spain, some thirty years ago, during the long excursions that he made under the seductive influence of its climate and people, industrial civilisation had not rendered everything uniform beyond the Pyrenees; the peasants, mountaineers and city-folks had preserved, all the truculent fancies of the national costumes and their originality in manners. In the cities one saw on all sides the old picaresque houses, narrow lanes, with lace like gables to which the sunbeams clung most charmingly and unexpectedly.

The poverty of costumes that Théophile Gautier, in 1840, pointed out with such regret in Castille, had not yet spread to the other spanish



provinces. Here the stage-coaches were everywhere escorted by *zagals* and *escopeteros* with big blunderbusses and *alpargatas*. The inns where one only found the national *puchero* and *garbauzo* seasoned with cheese and goat's milk. The artist has narrated with great humor to one of his friends, M. Gatschy, his first stage-coach entrance to Madrid: "Two or three time I had, there being no place for me, lost the coach at Leon. One morning hearing the mules's bells I rushed to the booking office; there remained but one place in the second coupé; the second coupé then! They loaded the top, the first coupé was filled, the inside, then they packed mountains of baskets on heaps of packages, and before taking away the ladder cried: "the passenger for the second coupé!" — It is I — they pointed with their finger to a deep, black cavity they



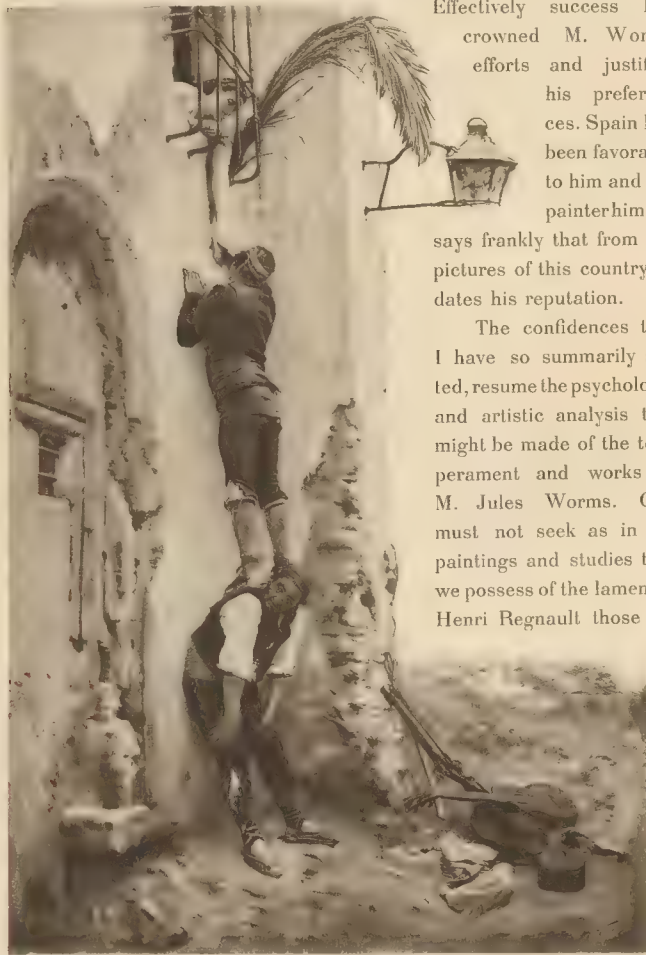
had arranged under the awning between five or six big hampers filled to overflowing with vegetables, meat, and cheeses. I made a grimace, but as I must get on at any price I scaled to my second coupé settled myself as I best could. All went well during a part of the journey, but an hour before arriving at Valladolid my situation became most critical. The road leading to that city descended a succession of steep hills, the baskets and packages, that the jolting on the roads had loosened the fastening, commenced to descend also, for an instant I feared perishing miserably, crushed by lettuces and chicorees. Happily despair gave me strength, and it was supporting on my shoulders, a new Atlas, a world of victuals, that I made my entrance to Madrid!"

I have already said that M. Worms had contracted with Spain only a marriage of reason and not of juvenile passion. He defends himself elsewhere from a fascination and enthusiasm that might have made him too amorous and carried too far his platonic dreams.

"One day in consequence of circumstances that I do not distinctly remember, he said to me lately, I had occasion to cross the Pyrenees. The sight of Spain carried me away. I met there picturesque costumes, types of original character, houses of singular structure: the women were pretty, piquant; the men handsome, of a manly, supple and vivacious beauty; the beggars draped in rags seemed as proud as D'Artagnan, Porthos and Aramis, I believed I had found there a new genre of painting: the French peasants with their blouses and wooden shoes, the Parisian workman in a tall hat and ready made suit, an imitation gentleman, afforded me no inspiration.



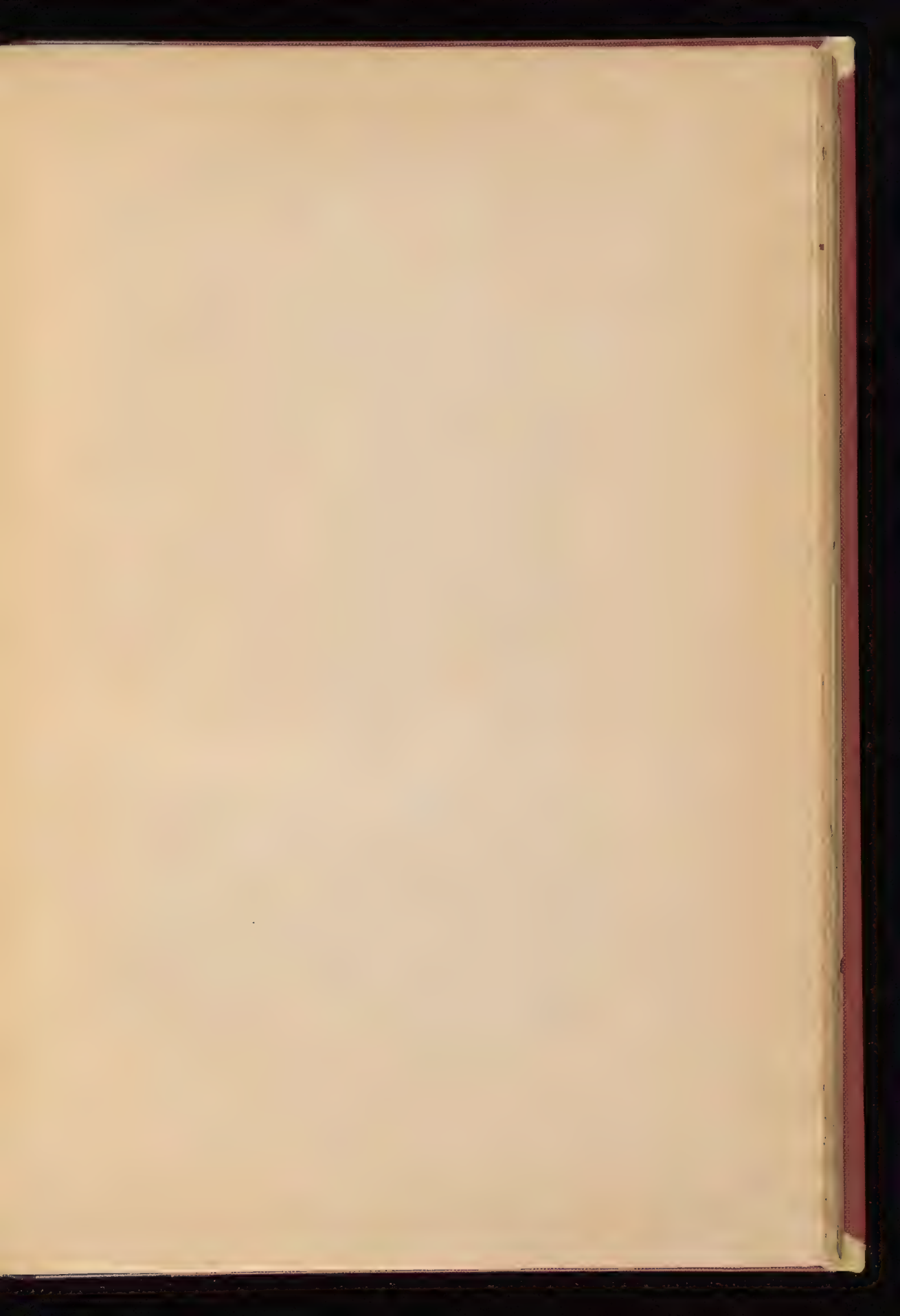
In consideration of all this I made myself a painter of Spanish scenes, and I must admit that in consequence, I have not found myself badly off."

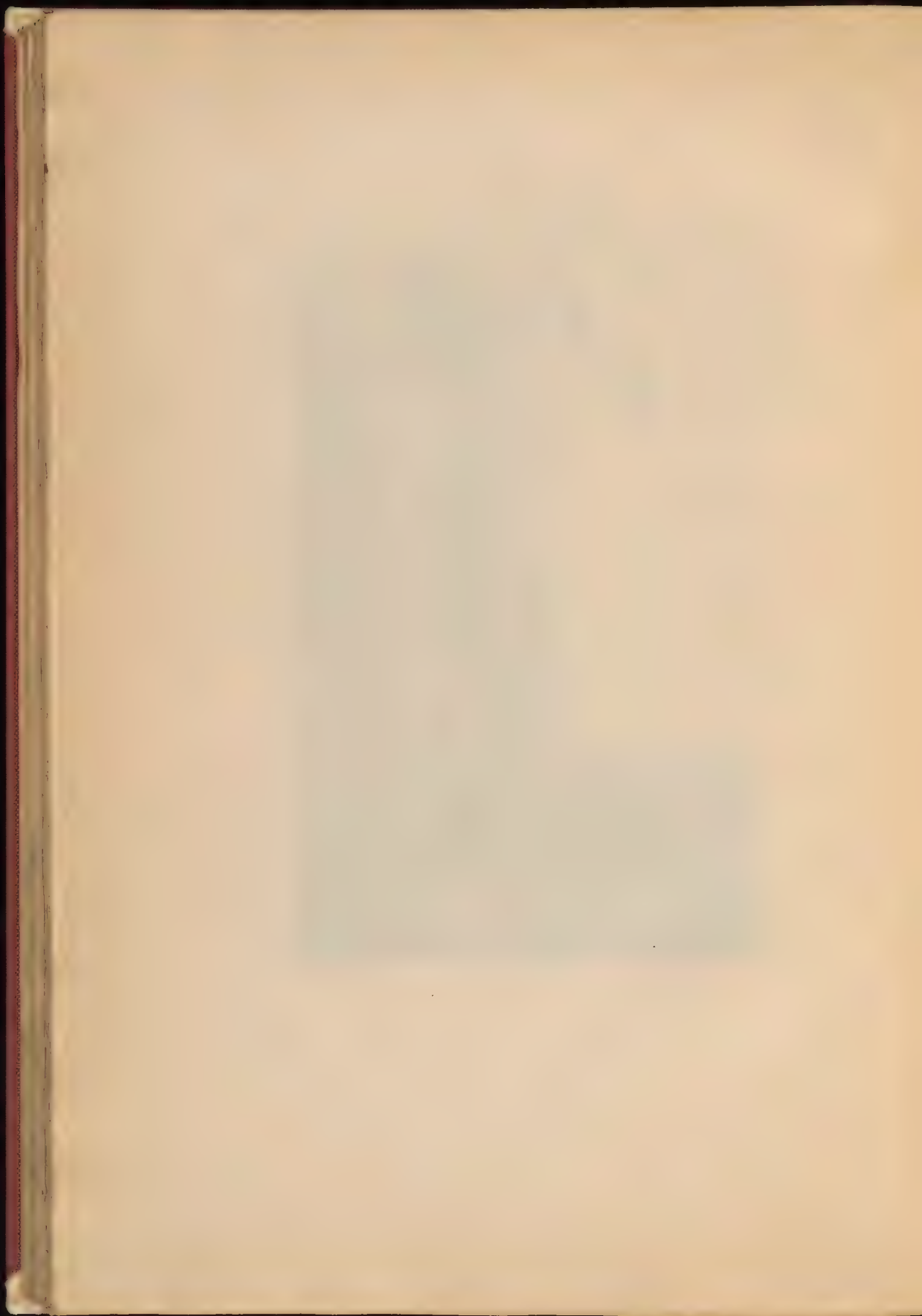


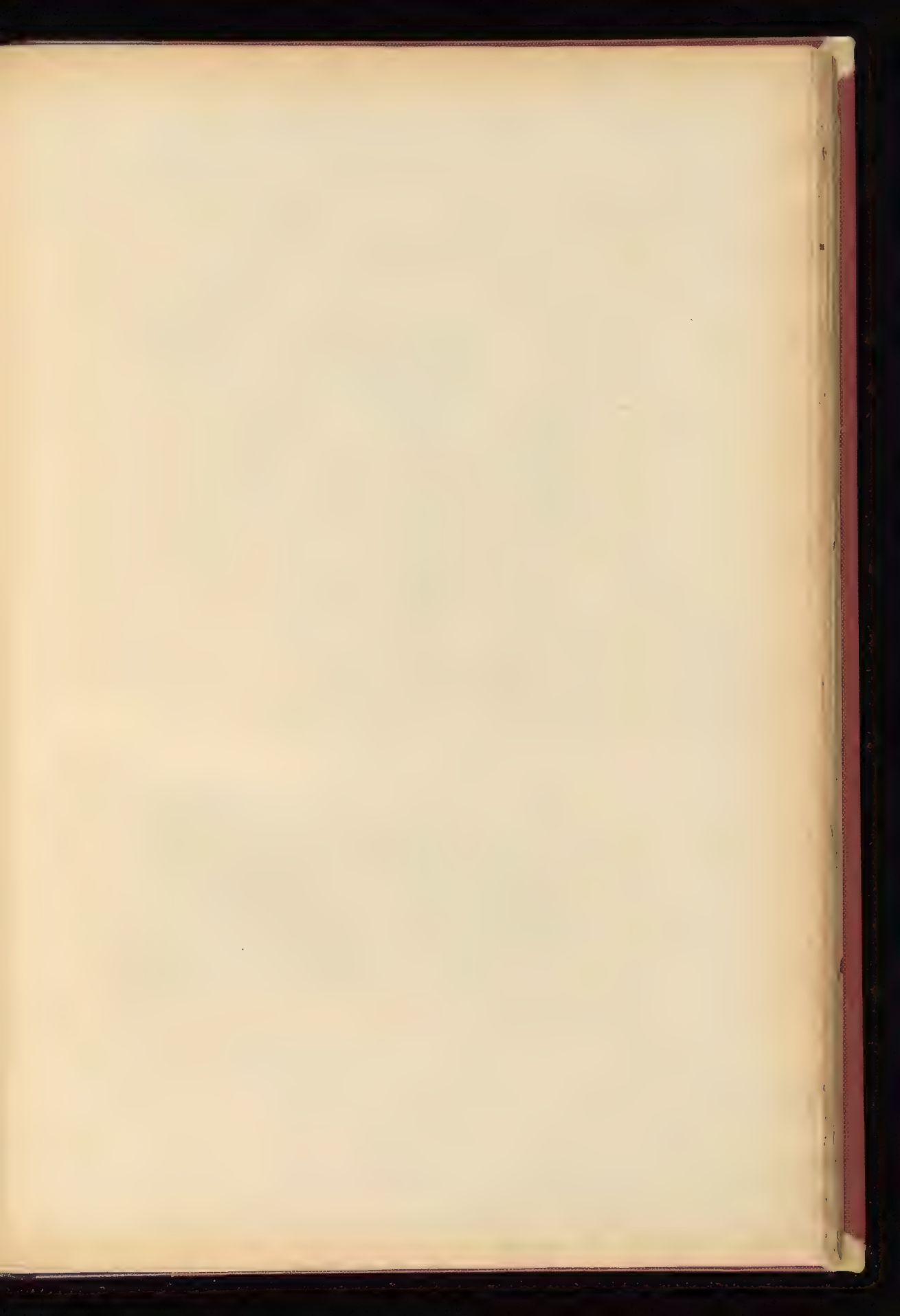
Effectively success has crowned M. Worms efforts and justified his preferences. Spain has been favorable to him and the painter himself

says frankly that from the pictures of this country he dates his reputation.

The confidences that I have so summarily stated, resume the psychologic and artistic analysis that might be made of the temperament and works of M. Jules Worms. One must not seek as in the paintings and studies that we possess of the lamented Henri Regnault those en-

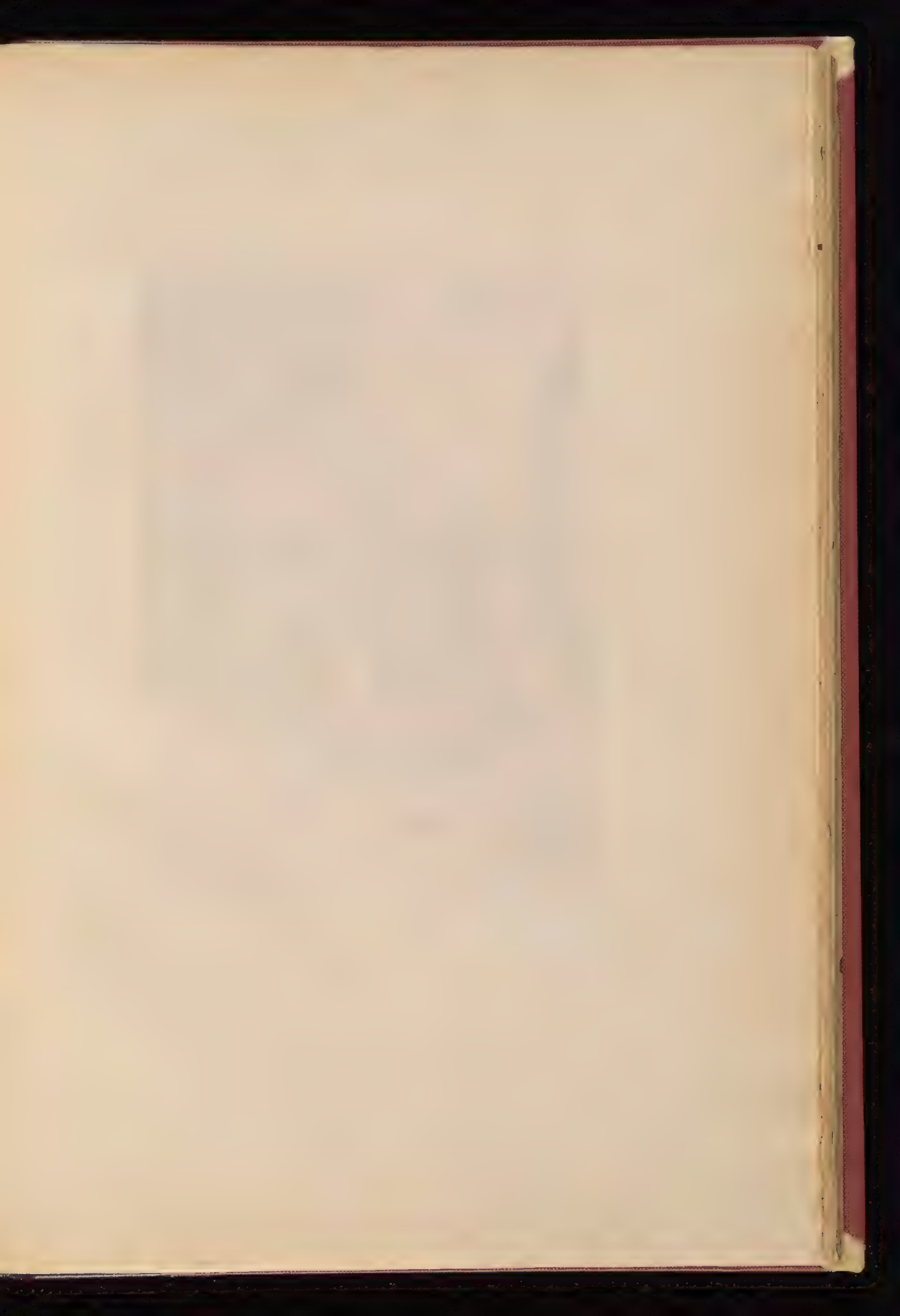






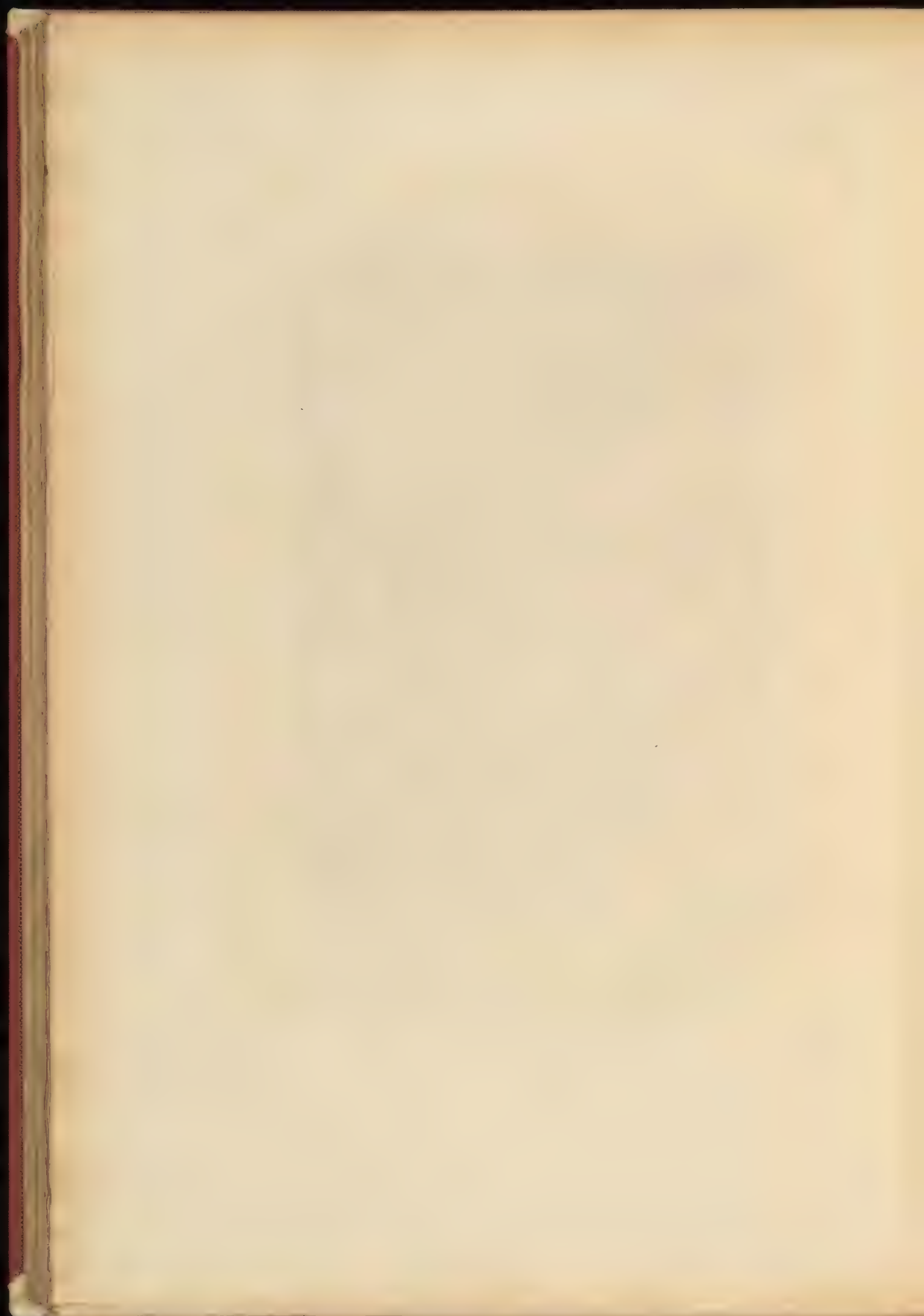










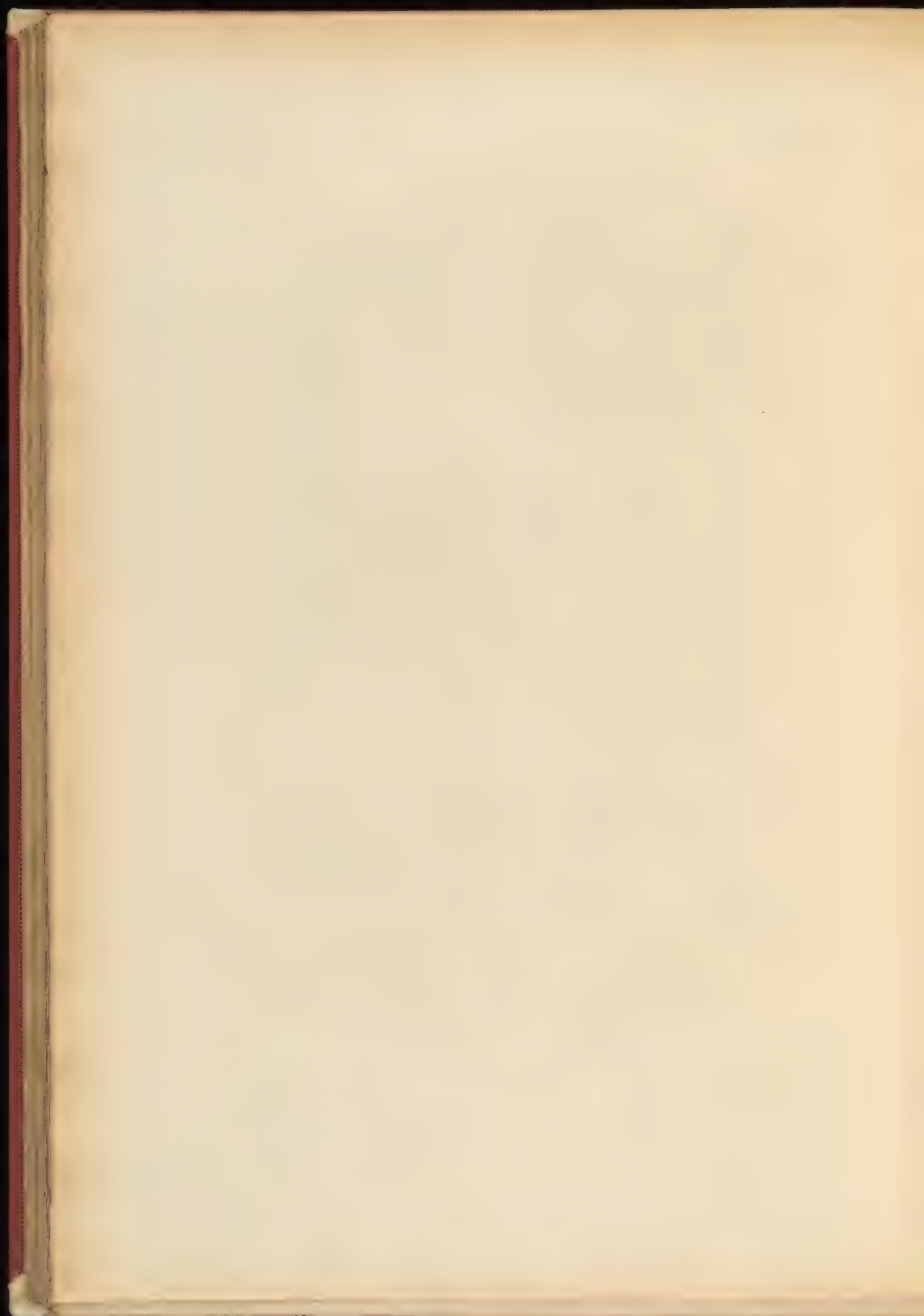






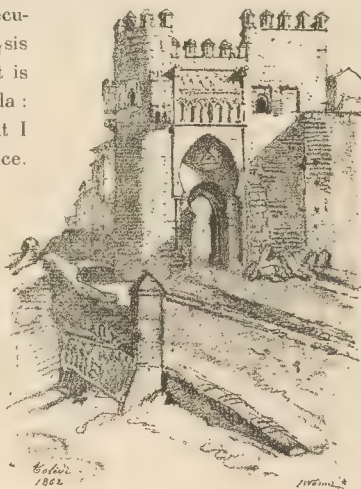






chanting effects of overwhelming light that fascinated his colorist's eye and imagination, those dazzling landscapes, for which, he said : "I rush into fantastically difficult water-colors, strangely harmonious symphonies of color. M. Jules Worms recounts as a tourist observing the manners and customs of Spain rather than as a poet.

Historical souvenirs do not haunt him, and he does not desire to raise the corners and expose the miseries and social evils of the country he is traversing. A writer who has given a spirited pen-portrait of him cites a fragment of a letter that seems to me to be more characteristic of his peculiar temperament, than any analysis that I could make; this fragment is the description of a rural corrida : "I recall a patronal festival that I witnessed in the province of Valence. The people of Valence have in Spain the disagreeable reputation of being particularly ugly and ferocious, they had been described to me in such dark colors that I had some apprehensions about travelling in their territory, all the more that my work obliged me to mix the most possible with the lower class, there called *la genta cruda*.



I hasten to say that there, as everywhere in Spain, I have found the people excellent and have been able to go everywhere without experiencing the least inconvenience, but to arrive at my story : It was at Burriana a village situated a short distance from Valence that the celebration took place : First a procession, headed by music, a drum and dulzaina a kind of hautboy with a horribly piercing sound, then the village notables dressed, in spite of the intense heat, in the large blue cloth capa, holding big candles; about them a crowd of street-boys industriously collecting the wax as it dripped from the candles; then a collection of very naively carved

christs, virgins and saints of a most repulsive aspect. After this all kind of horse races, the horses manes and tails braided and tastefully decked with ribbons; neither race-course nor enclosed weighing stand, the riders let fly their horses, at full gallop in the principal street, which is fully four yards wide and is paved with very slippery little stones. Finally as finishing treat we had a *toro de Soga*. This is worthy a detailed description, for it is the most uncivilized sport that can be seen. The bull has attached to his horns a long cord, each extremity of which is held by half a dozen solid men, one of these groups walk in front, the other behind the bull. At the beginning of the promenade, the animal's one idea is to attack the men in front, they allow him to make a few bounds, then the men behind stop him suddenly by pulling the cord, which absolutely breaks the hams-strings. After a number of trials of the same kind, the bull will try no more, then the men in front pull on the cord to excite the animal. Finally after an hour of this agreeable pastime the infortunate bull is dragged through the streets half-dead, staggering at every step, blinded, with blood flowing from nostril and mouth. All the population become infuriated

against him, groups of urchins of all ages suspended to the window-bars kick at and beat him as he passes. It is at this time that accidents occur, for the bull, suddenly collecting together the remnants of his energy, sometimes charges suddenly into the crowd and kills very neatly his man, as I saw that day."

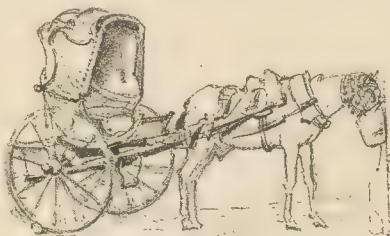
Here is a story excellently told, with perfect precision of details that shows a skillfull and conscientious observer, who keenly interests us, on





account of the peculiar manner in which he makes we acquainted with it, and of its character of indiscutable authenticity.

In all the works he has brought back from Spain, M. Jules Worms has desired to paint in the same manner intimate scenes with the same picturesque qualities that he has seen there, and it is less a profound emotion or vibrating sensation than a sweet, delicate, peaceful and charming sentiment that he seeks to convey to the spectators. What are the subjects, what is the note of the principal pictures exhibited by him in annual Salons during the last fifteen years? "Les Tondeurs de Mulets" (Salon of 1872).



On a sunny place of Grenada bronzed complexioned Gitanos, smoking cigarettes, are occupied shearing mules, a muleteer has profited by the same circumstance to have his hair cut by the picturesque industrials. His comrades, with traditional nonchalance, are regarding this interesting operation, and talking with the gypsies or women of the people.

"Le Départ des Contrebandiers" (Salon of 1869). In a farm patio, a company of smugglers are preparing to leave on an expedition. One is harnessing a poor white-haired mule, others are loading heavy bales on the back of a second mule, an anxious group are peering through the crack of the door, and the chief, a vigorous Aragonais, intreats earnestly, in a fatherly manner, one of his young recruits to finish his loving recommendations to his *novia*. The scene is picturesque, full of life and very ably arranged.

"Le Tambour de Ville" (Salon of 1875). A village square full of rosy shadows and crude light. — The big, proud drummer makes known

to a group of the inhabitants, who listen with interest, a communication from the junte, the figaro of the place, followed by his dog, has curiously come out from his barber-shop, the types present a great variety of expression and physiognomy. The composition shows an original observation.

"El Jaleo". Upon a table in the patio of an old moorish house, in the shadow of fig-tree, a beautiful girl is dancing to the sound of an orchestra of guitarists and tambourine players. The invited guests and friends standing or squatting on mats accompany with their voices and applaud the dancer. This painting vividly interests by the picturesque character of its composition and by the exactness and variety of its costumes.

"La Sérénade interrompue." Two troupes of guitarists engaged for a serenade by two rivals meet, they come to blows, and the guitars

are used as arms, they fall upon each other, and during this time the beauty, from the balcony, with superb impartiality is watching the struggle between her *novias*.

"Une Course de novilllas" (1866). The sketch of this picture serves as a frontispiece to this study. The original belongs to the Pau museum. A *corrida* has been improvised in a village in the province of



Valence; the peasants have succeeded in rendering furious a poor bull who vigorously assails them. These fantastic *torreros* are flying as fast as possible, some taking refuge upon ladders, others climbing the trunks of trees and scaling the wooden palings. Sheltered upon a cart-wheel that they have hoisted to the top of the wall, some ugly rogues are tormenting, by their cries and imprecations, the bull. Two wandering musicians, a flute and a tamborine, perched on a cask furnish music for the fête. There is humor and original fancy in this composition.

All these pictures might be named, if the qualification does not sound too pretentious, works of the ethnographic genre. In Spain the



field for these studies is very vast, embracing so many types from such different centers North and South, East and West, the scene changes with the costumes, manners and traditions. M. Worms while remaining in his adopted country did not wish to separate entirely from his first artist love: the genre intime.

It is "Le Talent précocé, La Vocation, La Fleur préférée, Chaque Age a ses plaisirs, Le Barbier distrait, La Première Culotte". An old guitarist is giving a guitar lesson to a child of a few years who endeavors with a happy intension to pick with his little fingers the strings of the colossal instrument.

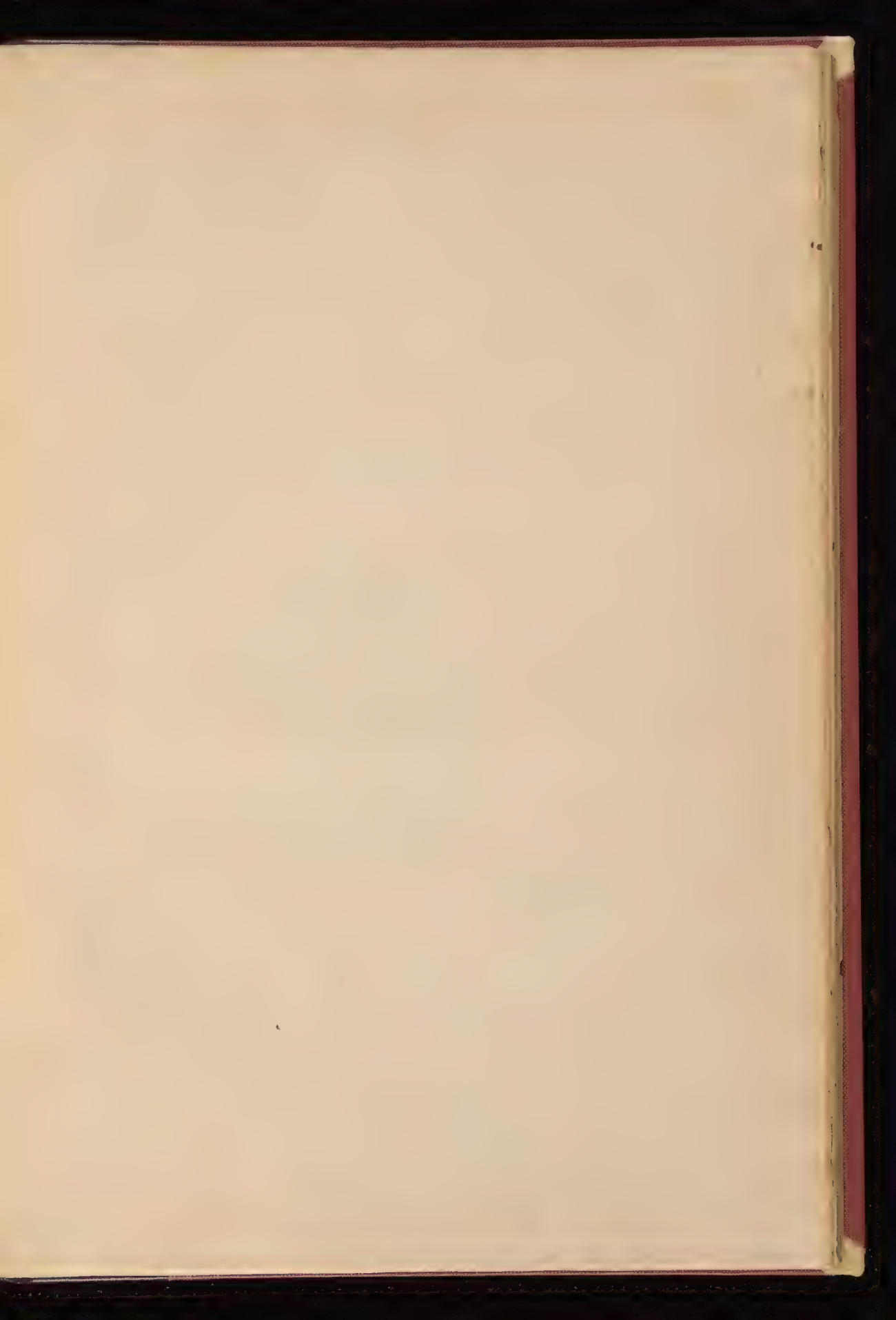
It would be unjust not to recognise that these scenes are given with spirit, that they present a certain humor always in good taste, in a word, that the artist knows how to ably maintain his work in the tone of true comedy and the vaudeville of refined society. The point is never coarse nor the pleasantry of bad alloy. If I did not fear to seem too particular and thus justify the popular proverb in regard to criticism, I would add that I regret, in presence of so many charming works, full of such delicate sentiment, executed with so much authority, that the artist has deemed it necessary to demand from oddity of manners, little known costumes, and exotic fancies, the elements of interest and originality.

Permit-me to write a few personal reflexions on this point that the reader may treat as paradox if he so pleases. Art, in my humble opinion, consists of unity and simplicity. The painter who pursues multiplied sensations of an ideal seems to me to resemble the legendary hunter who hunts two hares at the same time, both give him the slip. Placed before the immortal "Dispute du Saint-Sacrement" or "l'École d'Athènes", the sublimity of the artist though expressed by an incomparable form absorbs me entirely, all my sensorial and psychological faculties. "La Descente de la Croix" dazzles, intoxicates. Greuze moves us by his "Paralytique", his "Heureuse Mère de Famille". The nymphes of Watteau, the mincing coquettes of Fragonard in their vaporous grace and picturesque charm delight the eyes. And the Rembrants are a poem of light. It matters little whether we encounter in a work an idea of some sort. A high philosophical idea, or one of comedy or vaudeville, a sentiment resumed in a thought or some past brought back to the mind; if the form, coloring or drawing reproduces an ideal or real fragment of nature and enchants by its poesy.

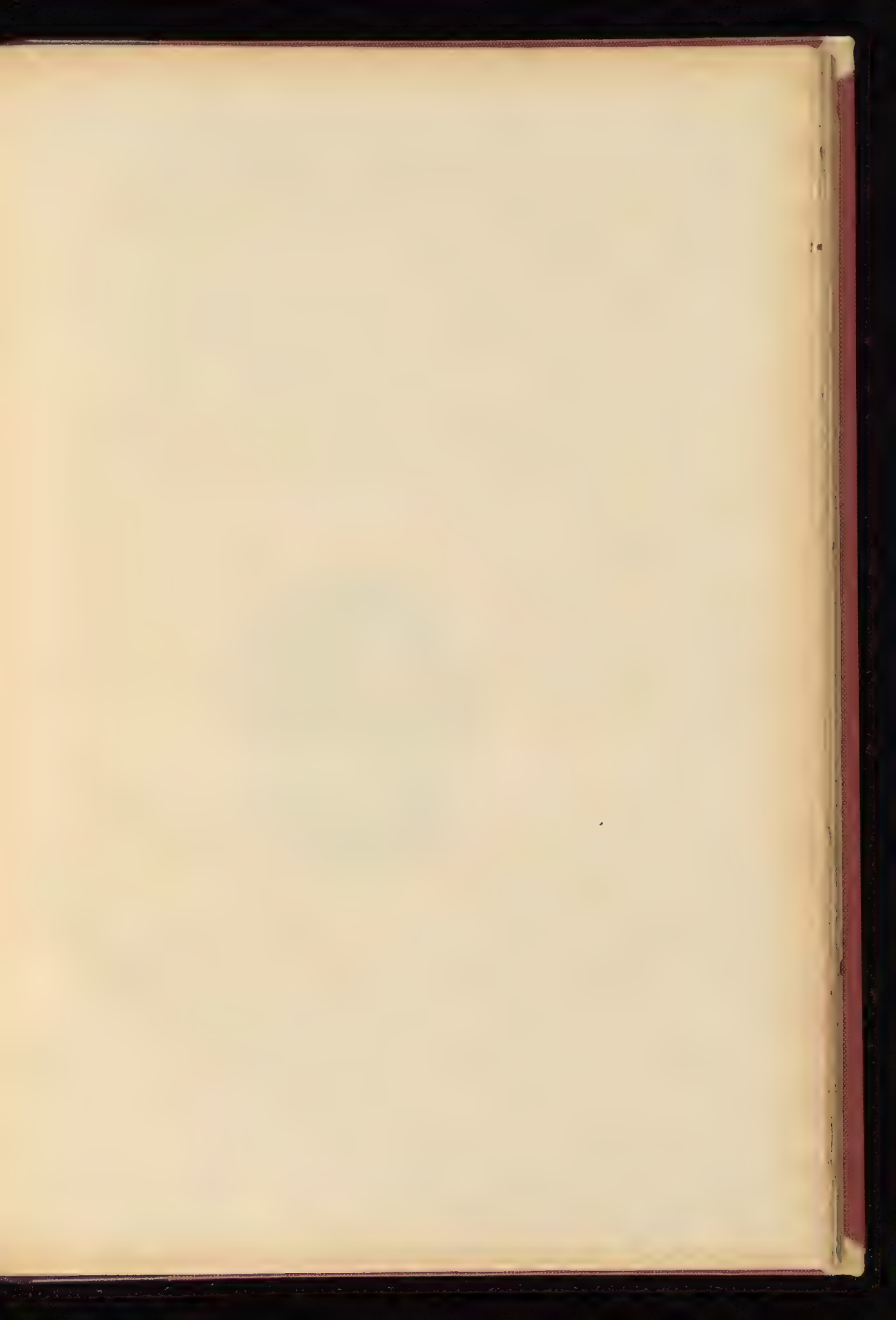
That M. Worms represents in the sunlit court of a posado, in the clear shade of lemon trees or in the midst of a dusty arena toreros and elegant picadores, disquietingly beautiful gitanos carried away in the voluptuous dance, or the picturesque muleteers; it is well done, and in it we find great pleasure. But if in all this explosion of burning sun and dazzling light, which is sufficient for all the most delicate and most violent sensation, he becomes preoccupied as to the smile, the sentiment and the tears then there is stupefaction and confusion. The work is inferior and pleases less. Whatever may be the value of this incidental criticism, M. Worms is, on the whole, the painter who at this time has best seen, and best rendered intine and picturesque Spain.

MARIUS VACHON









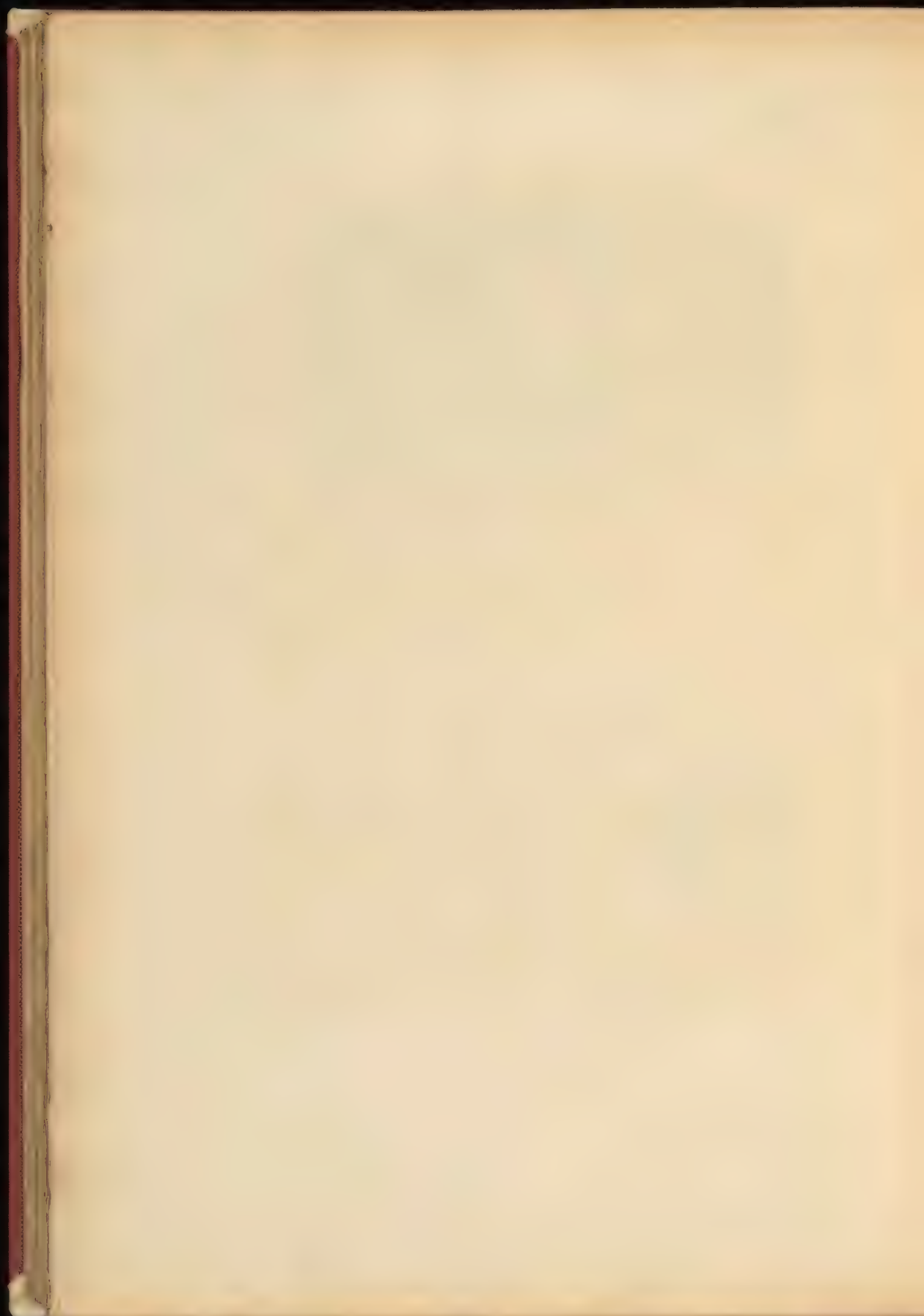




















## L.-EUGÈNE LAMBERT



English artists, who are more submissive than french artists to the heavy yoke of specialisation, abstain from attempting more than one process at the same time. Thus those that have adopted oil-painting will not, — or dare not — know any other medium. Those who have given themselves to water-color painting never touch the oil palette.

The camps are definite. Each in his way imposing on his fancy the narrow limits of one art form, imprisoning himself in a formula, or a genre raising high walls around his garden, where the flowers of his thought waste away for want of space, sun and free air. In spite of the legend, truth does not live at the bottom of a well even in England.

She is intended to hover on the heights where imagination and talent may seek her.

In France, the gardens are also enclosed, which we regret, but at least the partitions are slight. They are open-work trellises, in which the weeds may twine, that are easily scaled, and one passes readily from the domain of oil painting into that of etching and water-color.

Almost all the members of the Society of french water-colorists have painted and still continue to paint in oils. The pure water-colorist, — I mean those who have devoted themselves to painting exclusively in water, — are decidedly in the minority.

Here, after having exposed the situation, might be explained why, in principle, our preference is given to those artists who have become masters of the two processes. The demonstration would be easy, but perhaps it would carry us too far away. We will content ourselves then by saying that to our idea the painter who paints his pictures in oil and in water-color seems to us to have a marked advantage

over him who works exclusively in water-colors. This may be accepted as a general rule, the more easily, as we shall find to confirm it several exceptions in the «Société des Aquarellistes.»



It is only seven or eight years since Eugène Lambert has commenced to wash in water-colors. Until then oil painting absorbed and held entire possession of him. Now the canvas and the paper are equally familiar, and he takes one or the other medium to express his artistic thought as the color of his subject seems to demand the rich tones of the palette; or the lighter tints dissolved in water.



By the aid of these two processes, M. Lambert like the clever wit he is, tells the most varied, anecdotic and charming stories in the world : stories of animals.

The field that he has reserved to himself, that which he has made his



own by an inimitable talent is so vast that I cannot make up my mind to see in M. Eugène Lambert a specialist.



The idea of a speciality always implies, in effect, nar-

row limits. The specialist — the one that should be contested, — is the man of one idea, of tiresome repetitions, the useless and unproductive squirrel always turning in his cage. The ancients said of him : " The man of only one book. " We can no longer employ this expression since encyclopedias exist.

He who explores a subject, who studies its varied manifestations, who



surprises the secrets of its life, its manners and its thoughts must not be confounded with the specialist of limited views. In the animal world which is nearer to nature, consequently nearer to truth than ours, M. Eugène Lambert has discovered an unlimited artistic mine. His observation embraces the

play of all the instinctive passions : hunger, thirst, love, the desire for pleasure ; — of all the fundamental vices : gluttony, theft, lust, envy and anger ; — of all physical qualities : beauty, strength, skill, acuteness and finesse of the senses ; — of all the ever admirable virtues : maternal love, charity, tenderness, modesty ; — and other brilliant moral qualities among which should be counted love of home and intelligence.

If here is a speciality, we must admit that the greatest philosophers would find it sufficiently vast to serve them as a field of observation.

M. Eugène Lambert prefers to paint the animals which are familiar and domesticated with us. He takes for his models those nearest him in the farmyard, the dove-cot, the warren, in the kennel or in the house. After the doves, the rabbits and the dogs he turned to cats for motives.

I imagine the artist in his choice of this last model, was incited by the extreme difficulty the painting of this fascinating animal presents. For if one



has had the pleasure of having cats about them, they know how capricious they are in their movements, what imperative fancies cause their constant change of place, what lively curiosity causes them to run, bound, jump and climb. Here are models who keep the pose badly. How is it possible to seize the glancing light, the starting feline, that unlikely flexibility in its unforeseen manifestations. To paint cats, to group and compose them in pictures, this seems at first glance really impossible. It required all the tenacity and patience of M. Eugène Lambert; it also required his promptness of eye and thought, to attain the result he had purposed. And at the price of what efforts he has arrived at fixing mobility itself, but also what



glory to have lead the way in a new path, to have conquered for art one more beauty.

The cat's beauty is admirable. It is one of the most complete that exists, because it is the result of différent and almost opposite gifts.



At one time with large stripes like a zebra, again covered with a white ermine, now coal black and again clothed in an orange-red fur, the cat is one of the finest robed creatures of the creation, and is noted for an instinctive and unbridled coquetry. The care of her toilet, the smoothing of her hair that she polishes with her little rosetongue, the arrangement of her coiffure which she accomplishes by shaking her head, the conquering twist that she gives to her moustache by a stroke of her paw, occupy her leisure moments, those that are not devoted to the chase or to love-making. The cat is a charming adventurer, she willingly seeks her good fortunes in the gutters but always returns

to her adopted hearthstone. Rover and home-body here at once is a singular contrast. But it is not the only one. She is bold and prudent, at once strong and supple, indepen-



dant and attached, whatever it may do or under whatever aspect it may be seen it is always admirable.

The cat — in Egypt — has been worshiped. This is however so common a privilege that it is useless to insist upon it. It seems to us to be more glorious to have inspired profound passions in men of exceptional value. Is it necessary to recall the french kings who have shown a marked predilection for them? Is it necessary to repeat that one of our most illustrious ministers, Richelieu, sought repose from State affairs in watching a basketful of kittens? And to these flattering compliments are to be added those of Théophile

Gautier, of Baudelaire, of Paul Saint-Victor? The beauty of the cat has had its poets, ought it not also to have its partisans among the workers in the plastics arts.



Granville was the first to be enamored. There exists in his works a certain number of sketches that show a long and interested observation of the cat. I do not refer to the plates where animals figure as illustrating *La Fontaine* and *Florian*, but drawings that he made for himself with evident pleasure. Granville has thus noted seventy-five expressions shown by the cat's physiognomy or gesture.

Granville only held a pencil in his fingers but Eugène Lambert has his brushes.

Granville only studied cats incidentally, Eugène Lambert lives with them constantly, makes them his comrades and friends, each day loves them better and finds them more interesting.

Upon one of his easels, we saw the other day a sketch for a fan : the composition, forming the necessary part of a circle, comprised a heap of fresh flowers in the midst of which peered the heads of three red and white kittens. Whilst admiring this happy grouping we remarked to the artist that we saw what difficulties there must be in this style of composition, the red and white coloring of the heads seeming, at first not to disengage themselves readily from the delicate tones of the scattered bouquet.



It is easier than you think, he answered, the cat! but she is also a flower.

This saying shows with what a colorist eye M. Eugène Lambert looks at his amicable models. No one has ever better observed, appreciated or rendered them than this artist.

There is but one voice in proclaiming the talent of him who has so justly been styled : the Raphael of cats. At the cost of what persevering efforts, has this glorious title been gained. An incessant study, a never-



sleeping observation, an unflinching patience joined to an excellent sentiment of composition and of color, and a thorough science of drawing, have alone made M. Lambert the unique master in the genre that he has created.

Of those tempted by his success to follow in the path that he has made,



none have succeeded. The restlessness of the model has at first worn out and discouraged them. They have then asked if it was not possible to work from stuffed-animals, if this was not the secret of the painter's success in whose footsteps they were so anxious to follow. This hypothesis

caused numerous massacres, strange hunts have taken place round certain ateliers like those that are said to take place in the neighbourhood of zouaves' barracks and cheap restaurants. The number of victims was great, and the mère Michel, of legendary memory, could often have wept and accused the infamous Lustucru.

The taxidermists were the only ones who profited by these enterprises: from them the painter only received false indications of wooden gestures



and forms stuffed with straw and bran. The stuffed model was worthless. It was death that was posing, and it was life that must be painted.

Tired of the struggle the imitators of M. Lambert renounced their projects to the satisfaction of the feline race.



The cats may now sleep peacefully, their unique painter adores them and nothing would induce him to cause them the least harm. Far from it he lodges them sumptuously. At the end of his garden is a small summer house that is especially reserved for his models.

A furnace supplies the pleasant warmth so agreeable to these pets. As in all good institutions the food for the inmates is healthy and abundant, and for their exercise they have the garden where they sport during their hours of recreation.

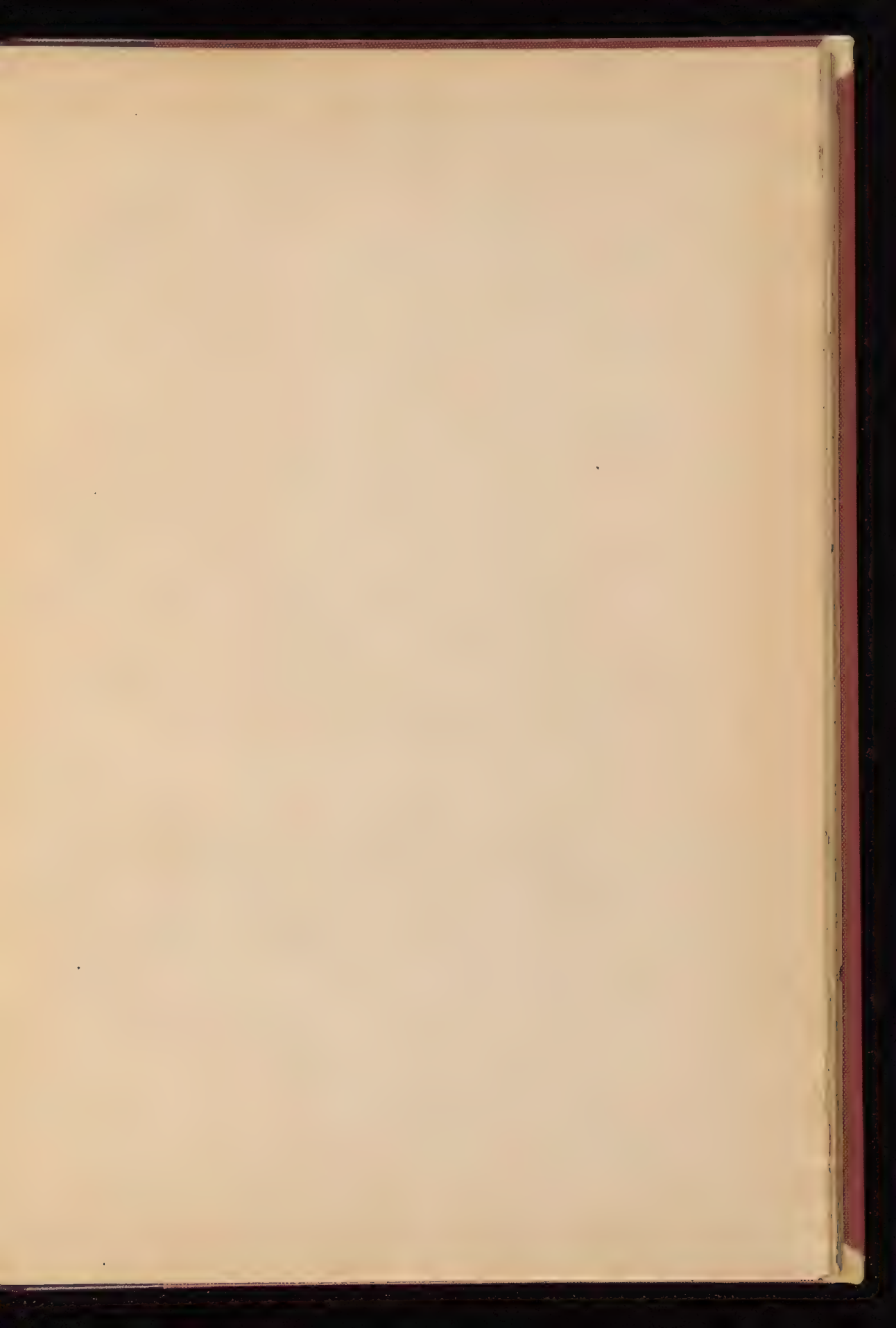
Finally when they are called to the atelier, they are luxuriously

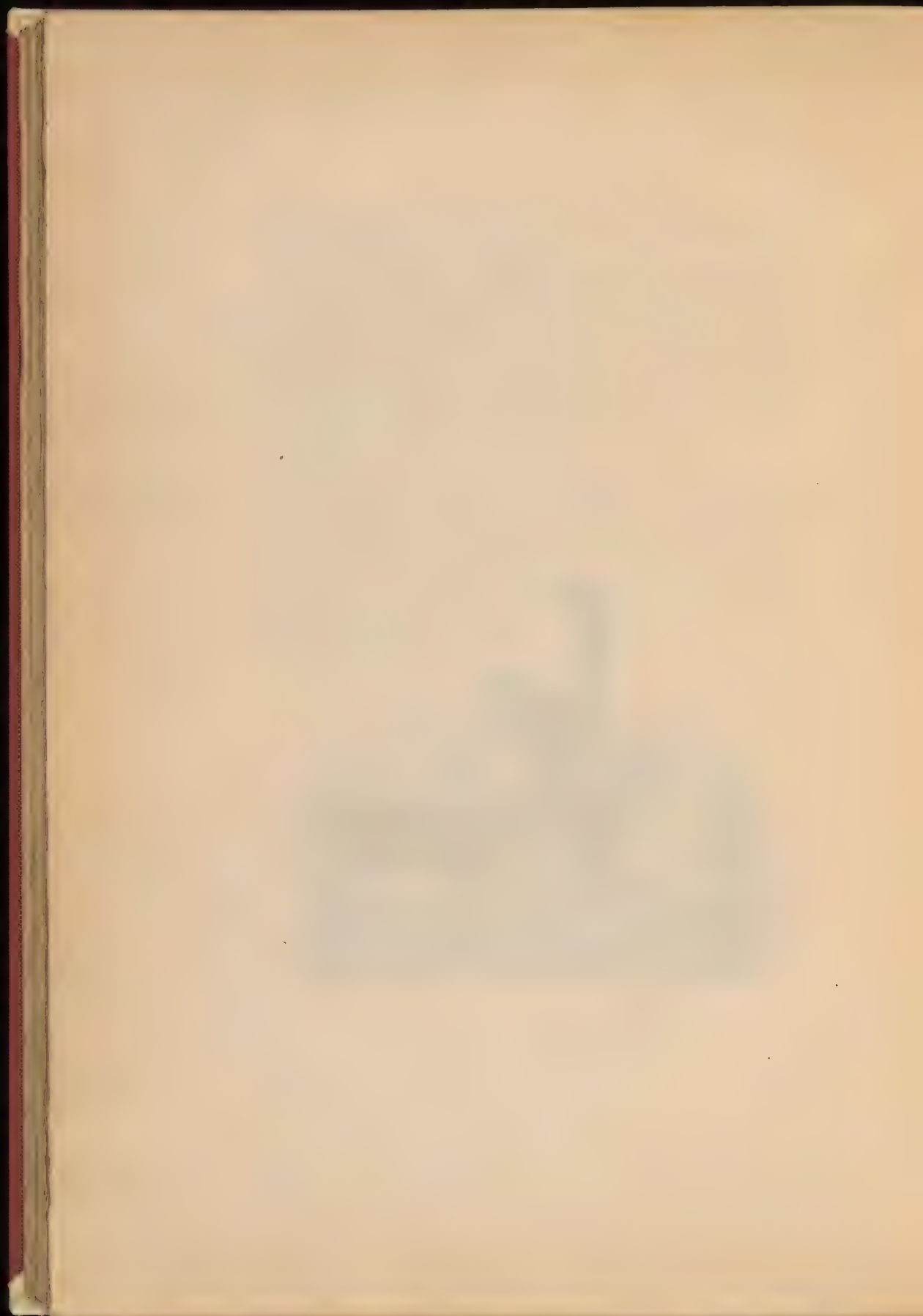
received, and an armchair, in stamped velvet, is specially reserved for their use.

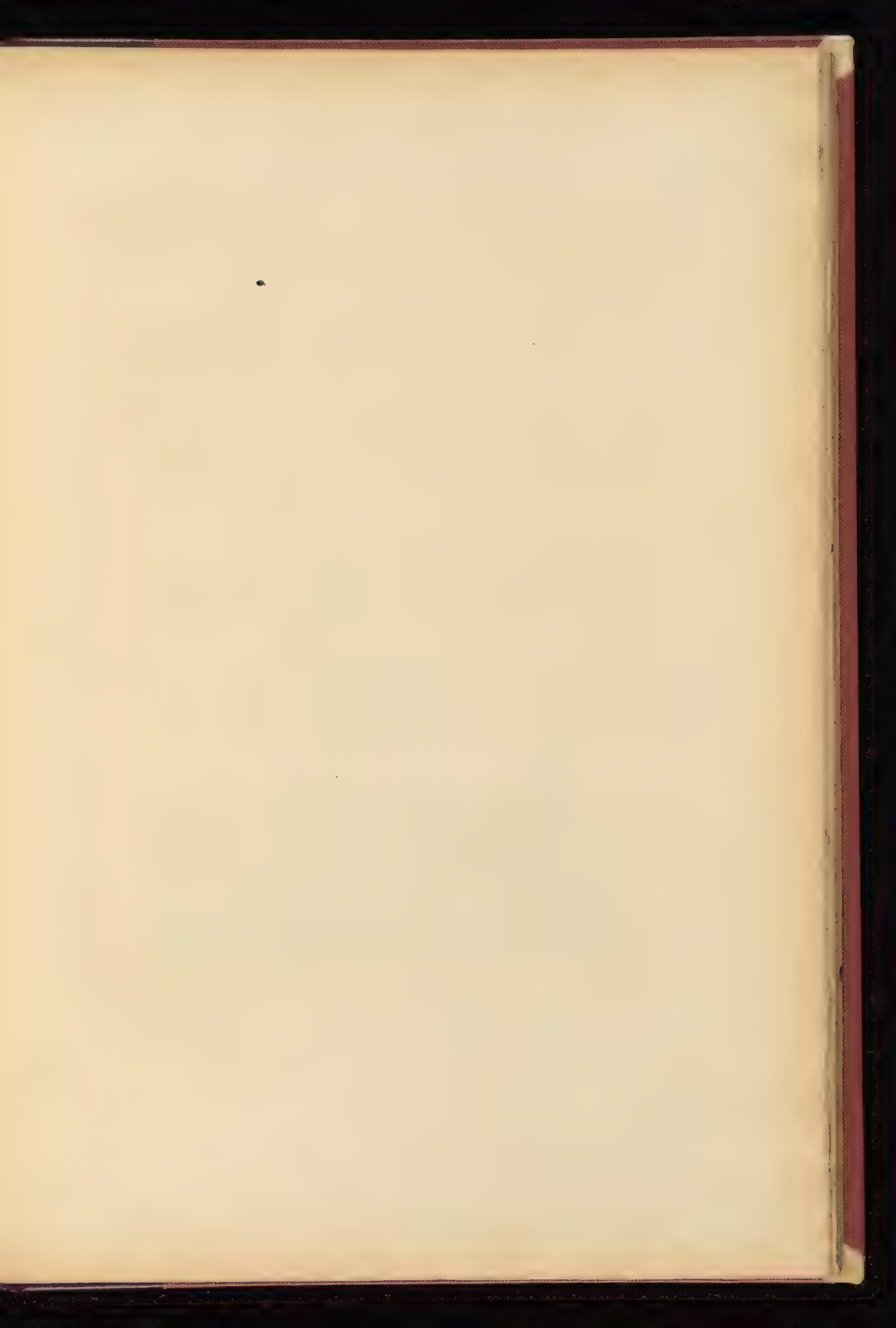
Bayle and Moncrif tell of a cat that belonged to a great belle of their time : M<sup>lle</sup> Dupuis. This very original person bequeathed to her cat a town house and a country house, with sufficient income to keep up the two houses and take care of her favorite. M<sup>lle</sup> Dupuis's cat in her two houses did not enjoy a happier situation than that which is made for M. Eugène Lambert's pretty assistants. Well cared for, petted and admired, what more agreeable life could they imagine. Their work being a pleasure and play. M. Eugène Lambert does not inflict them with tiresome poses, and when it is necessary that they should remain quiet for a time M<sup>me</sup> Lambert coaxes them to be still with her caresses.

The Raphaël of cats does not wait for chance to give him subjects for his pictures he invents them. As he knows intimately the character of his little friends, so he knows what idea will be suggested to them by the sight or contact of certain objects, that would be interesting to paint. He divines the gesture they will make and have before the accessory. His the expression they will alway realized, and the cat posing previsions are almost fail to fill the programme the artist has unknowingly does not plain this method, look for example at traced. To better ex- that old clock, whose





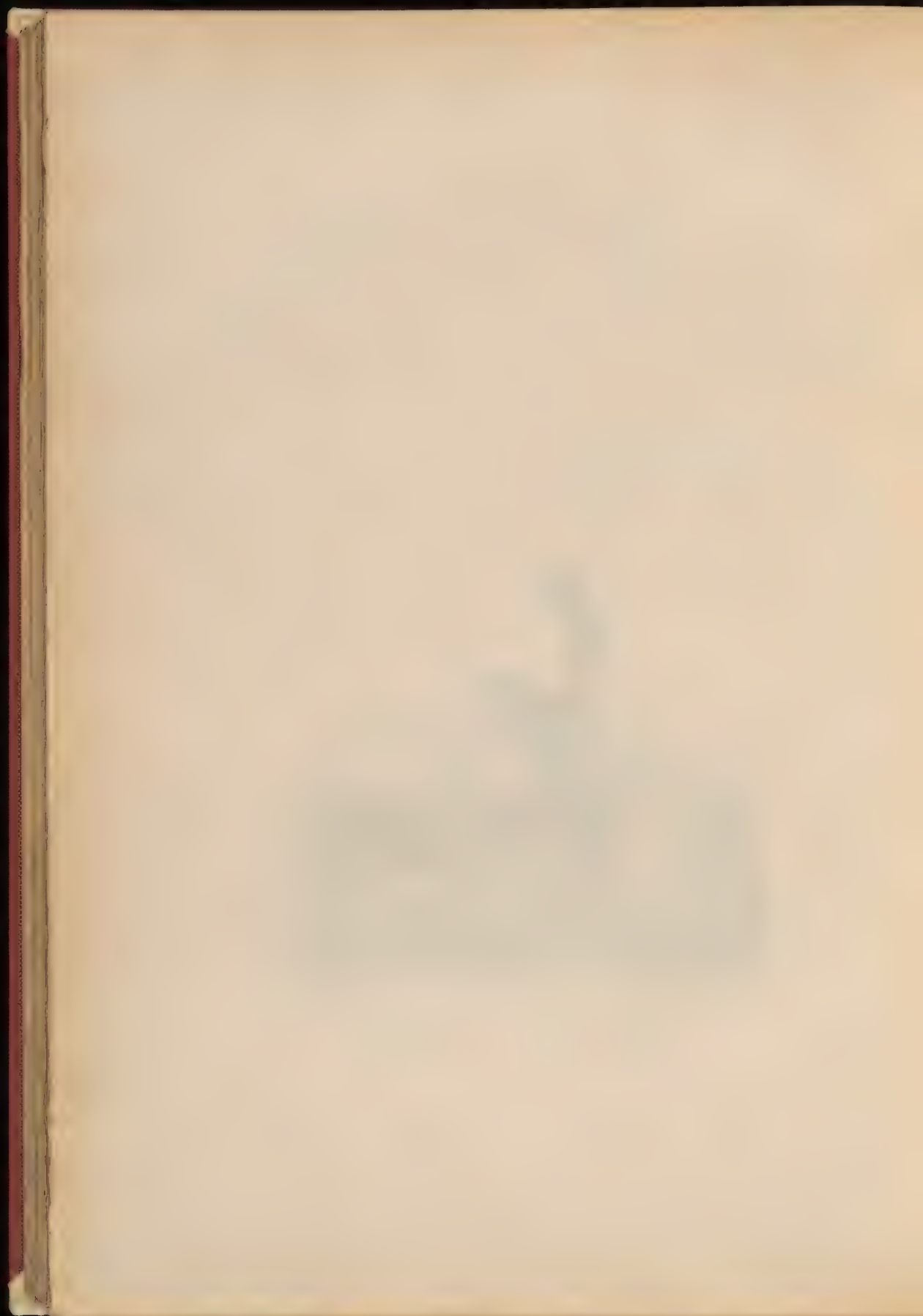


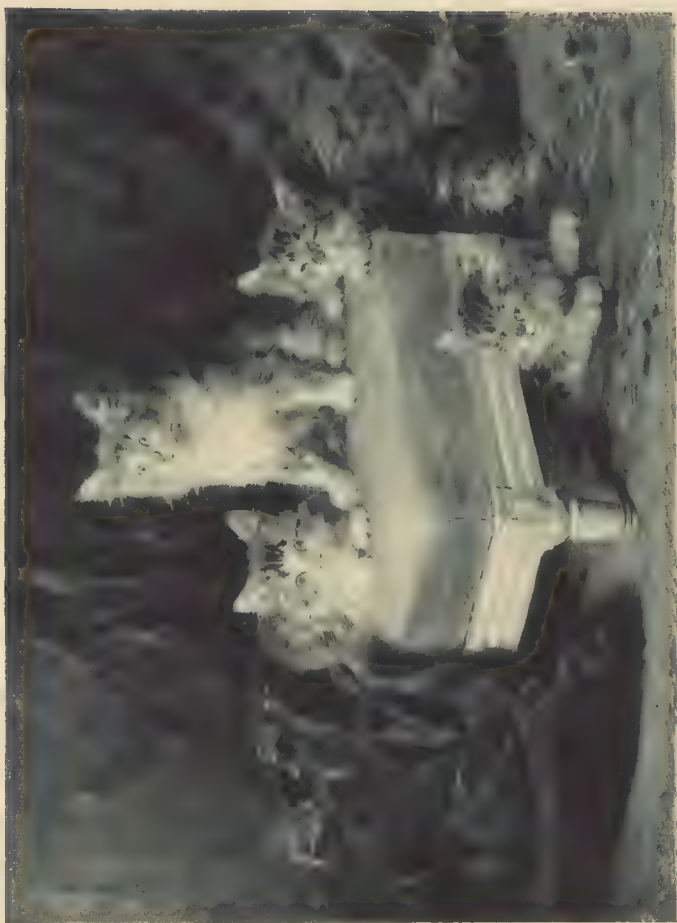


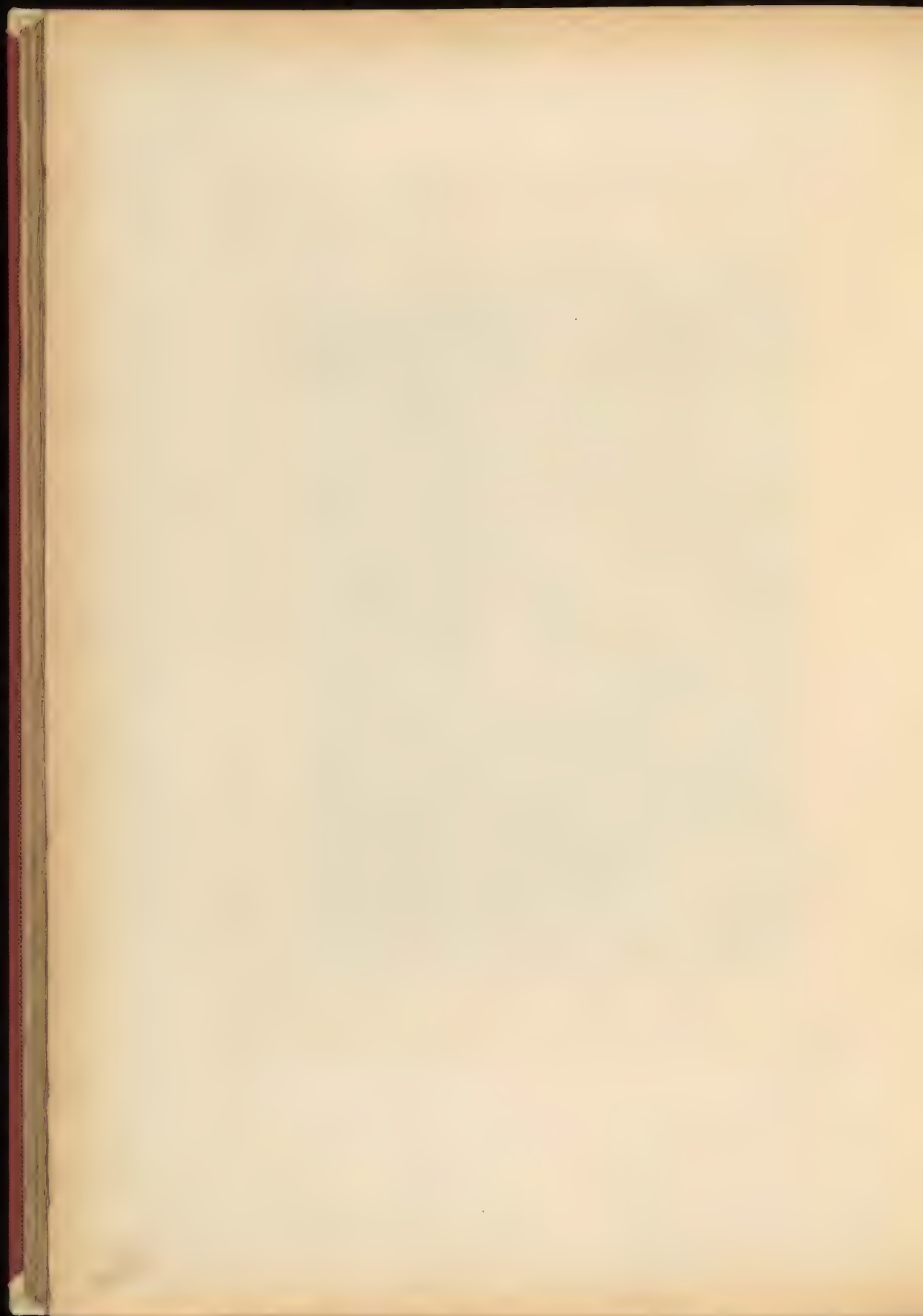








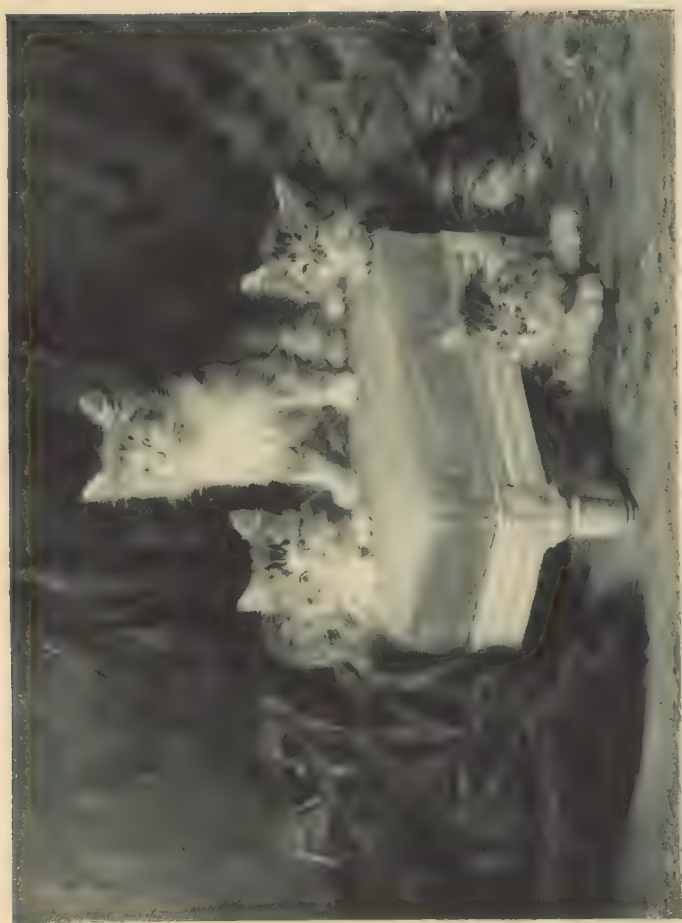














weight at the end of a chain is slowly descending. Here is an accessory that has fine details and that tempts the painters brush. What would a cat do in presence of this object? If it is still in its kittenhood it will sitting upright, touch with its paw the descending weight, thus making

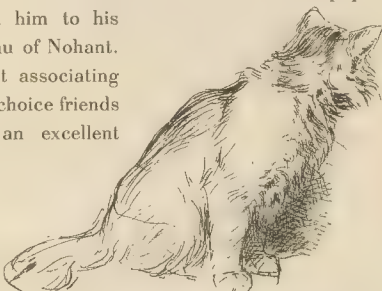


it swing, and when it sees the weight advance towards it, then retreat, it will throw itself, as upon a prey, and seize it. Here we have before us a charming picture imagined by the artist and realized by nature. All that is wanting is a title, the picture of which I have described the conception

was called by M. Eugène Lambert : "L'horloge qui avance."

But we were forgetting that this picture must be painted. And it is in the painting that the subject of this study excels.

M. Eugène Lambert early felt drawn towards art and he had the good fortune to at once find the best master and the best school. It was in the atelier of Eugène Delacroix that he was taught to hold a brush and to understand color. He here became the intimate friend of another pupil : Maurice Sand, who presented him to his mother, M<sup>me</sup> Sand at the chateau of Nohant. It is unnecessary to add that associating with the great writer, and the choice friends who formed her circle, had an excellent influence on the mind and taste of the young painter.



He commenced very young to earn his own livelihood, by working for the *Journal d'Agriculture pratique*, his drawings are interesting, showing the artist's hand and the careful conscientiousness of a scholar. He owes perhaps to this labor which demanded exactitude and scientific precision that perfection in his drawing, which to-day defies criticism.

Thus different influences have developed his natural qualities and have made him the beloved and glorious artist, whom it is a pleasure to unreservedly praise.

It does not enter into our study to enumerate the different stages of his career, neither the successes he has had at the annual exhibition of the Beaux-Arts. Perhaps some day we may have the opportunity to treat of his pictures in oil, to study more leisurely those charming works that we all remember : " L'Envoi," " L'Ennemi," " Pendant l'office," and so many others that the titles make so complete. For the moment the water-colorist only is in question and it is to his work in water-color that we must confine ourselves.

We find, among the works he has exhibited as a water-colorist : At the first special exhibition which took place in 1879, M. Eugène Lambert sent four pieces, these are their titles :

1 " La Nichée," 2 " Une Famille," 3 " Sur le Tapis," 4 " L'Ar-rêt."



Of these four compositions the most touching was " La Famille " established in a basket near which the mother cat was watching. " L'Ar-rêt " represented a drama. An unfortunate pussy has taken refuge on a table and regards, with hair standing on end, round eyed, a hunting dog silent and threatening; to complete the horror of the situation a nau-

ghty griffon, mounted on an armchair, is barking at the misfortune. In 1880 we find at the rue Laffitte :

1 " Une Chatte et ses petits," 2 " Un Éventail," 3 " Une famille," 4 " L'Envahissement."

This time the invader is a kitten that has crept into a cage to steal the magpies's breakfast. Escalade, theft in open day, with armed claws, the crime is evident.

The water-colors exhibited by M. Eugène Lambert in 1881 are six in number :

1 " Papa, Maman, Bébé," 2 " Une mère et ses petits," 3 " Chatons,"

4 "Grand comme nature," 5 "Conduite échevelée," 6 "Lunch." We will not describe them all, it will be sufficient to recal the second which represents the mother and her little ones playing on the lower shelf of an elegant piece of furniture, of Louis XVI. time, worthy of Riesener's



signature. An article might be written on the accessories that M. Eugène Lambert places before us and that are chosen with the fine appréciation and taste of an amateur in bibelots.

It is true that this is only a secondary motive in his art, but it is not the less

interesting to prove that in his work no details are neglected. In the "Conduite échevelée" we see a scared kitten climbing into the blonde tow, of an Ile de France spinning wheel. This spinning wheel is another curious bibelot, not withstanding the rustic simplicity of the wood of which it is constructed, its foam is so tapering and elegant that one might imagine it had been intended for queen Berthe, the legendary spinner, whose large



feet and small hands are so often mentioned. No one can have forgotten this fascinating picture.

In 1882 we saw in the new gallery of the water-colorist in the rue de Seze : 1 "Thèmes et Versions," 2 "Types variés," 3 "Les Restes," 4 "Sevrage," 5 "Le Puits des colombes," 6 "Une famille."



Each visitor has a right to make his choice in an exhibition. Ours would be the first and fifth numbers of the list. "Le Puits des colombes" is a luminous and varied composition. In the center, an old well covered with a roof takes the importance of a picturesque monument in proportion to the little feathered and furred creatures by which it is surrounded. Pigeons and rabbits animate this charming scene.

The water-color that has for a title "Thèmes et Versions" is an interior scene. For accessories there are big dictionaries, such as pupils grow pale over, and a fly-box which the same pupils ingeniously construct with paper



destined for their compositions. The ten year old architect who has constructed this edifice with the assistance of the artist has given it the solid turn of a feudal tower, and now hastens to utilise his work by enclosing in it a prisoner. An unfortunate may-bug, for misfortune spares no one in this world of ours, was the first tenant of this newly constructed fortress. A destiny full of bitterness! Here condemned to live in the narrow obscurity of his cell, whilst his tyrannical master reduces him to the humiliating position of a beast of burden, drawing a cart, or of a winged clown, doing the high-flying business at the end of a string. Instead of the joyous sounds of nature,



the harmonious murmur of the poplar leaves, the loving strettles of nightingales, he will only hear the ferocious shout of his conqueror crying : " Fly, may-bug, fly! " a cry full of irony and derision for it is adressed to a firmly imprisoned captive. However philosophical an honest coleoptera may be, the inhabitant of this paper tower cannot resolve to bear patiently the condition in which he finds himself, so he takes advantage of the moment when his young tyrant is occupied in devouring his lunch to seek an outlet, encumbered as he is with his own weight and his dark cuirasse he crawls with difficulty to a hole in the upper part of the édifice, several times without doubt his frail claws have slipped on the interior wall of his prison, several times he must have fallen back to the floor; but he knows that the future belongs to the persevering. A last and supreme effort permits him to reach the opening. Now he is balancing



himself on the crest of the wall. He see daylight! He might cry like a hero of the Ambigu : " Saved! thank God! " But no, he is not saved; he, on the contrary, is lost. Some curious and playful kittens, puzzled by the scratching of the claws on the paper are watching, with wide awake look, paws held in



readiness with outstretched claws, are waiting for him. Tuhs, after having been the plaything of man this thirty-five minute's Latude becomes the prey of fauves.

These two water-colors, one luminous, sunny, full of light, the other intimate, telling in a charming manner an interesting story, gives an excellent idea of the versatility of M. Eugène Lambert's talent and his artistic resources. The painter here celebrates the charming beauty of these familiar animals. He shows them to us in the expansion of their grace, he makes us see how curious and charming they are.

Let us repose on this impression pleasant as that of an eclogue. He endows them with not only their but his wit, without disguising them as



Granville, La Fontaine and Florian have done, who slandered animals by investing them with sentiments, thoughts and judgment of men. The poor things are much more innocent than we are. For we so refine our pleasures and sufferings that we have created for ourselves,

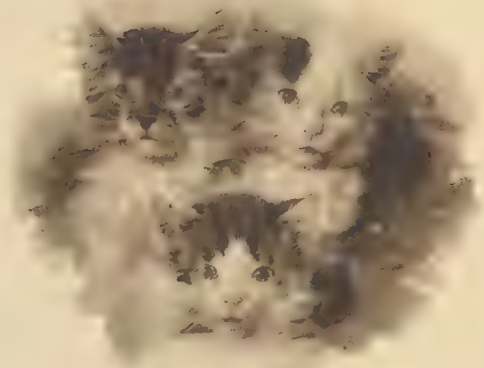


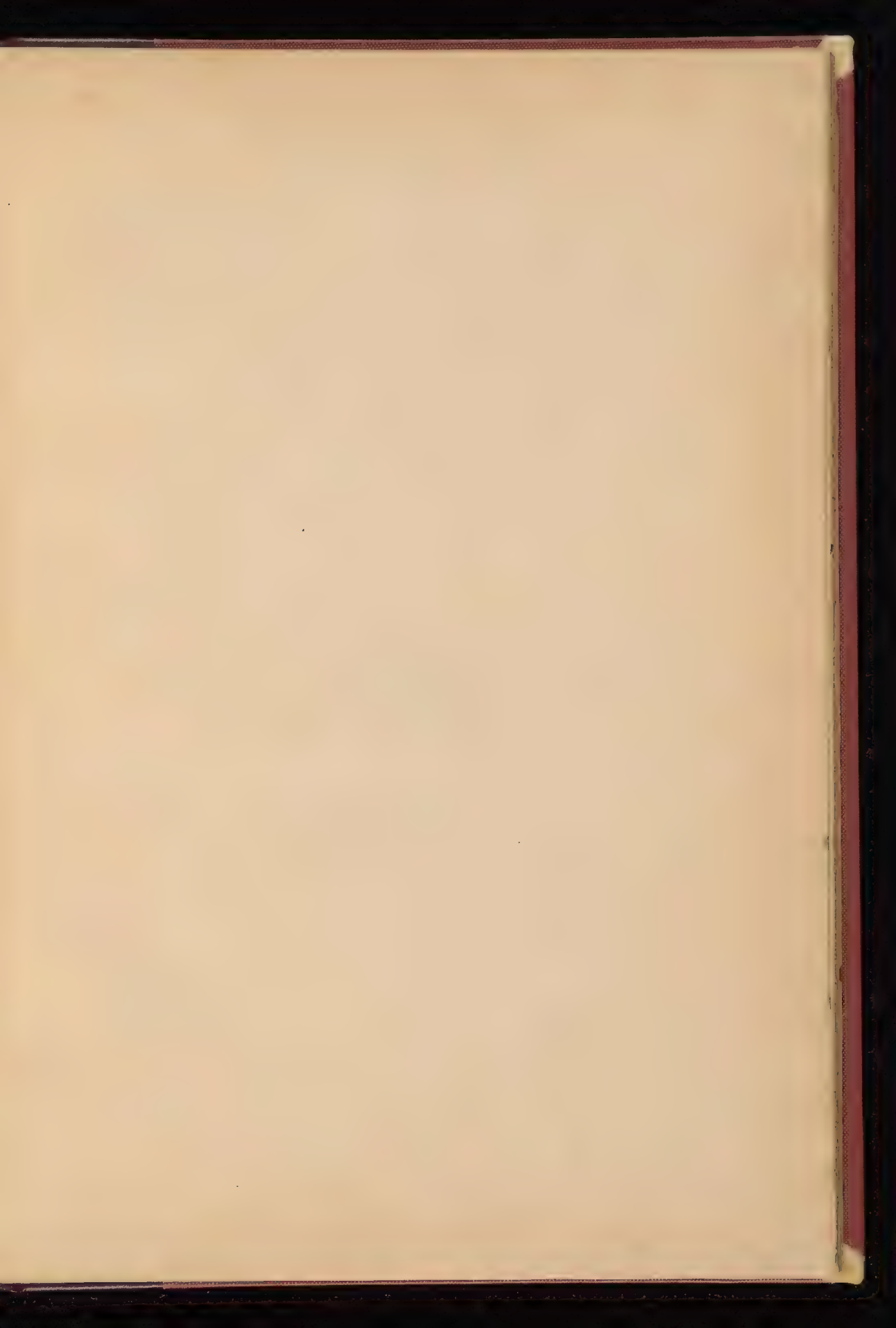
under the name of civilisation, trammels of all sorts, so that we live in opposition to the most elementary natural laws, thereby deforming the mind and the body to suit the fashion that makes books and decrees style. Whilst they limit themselves to be simply as they were created.

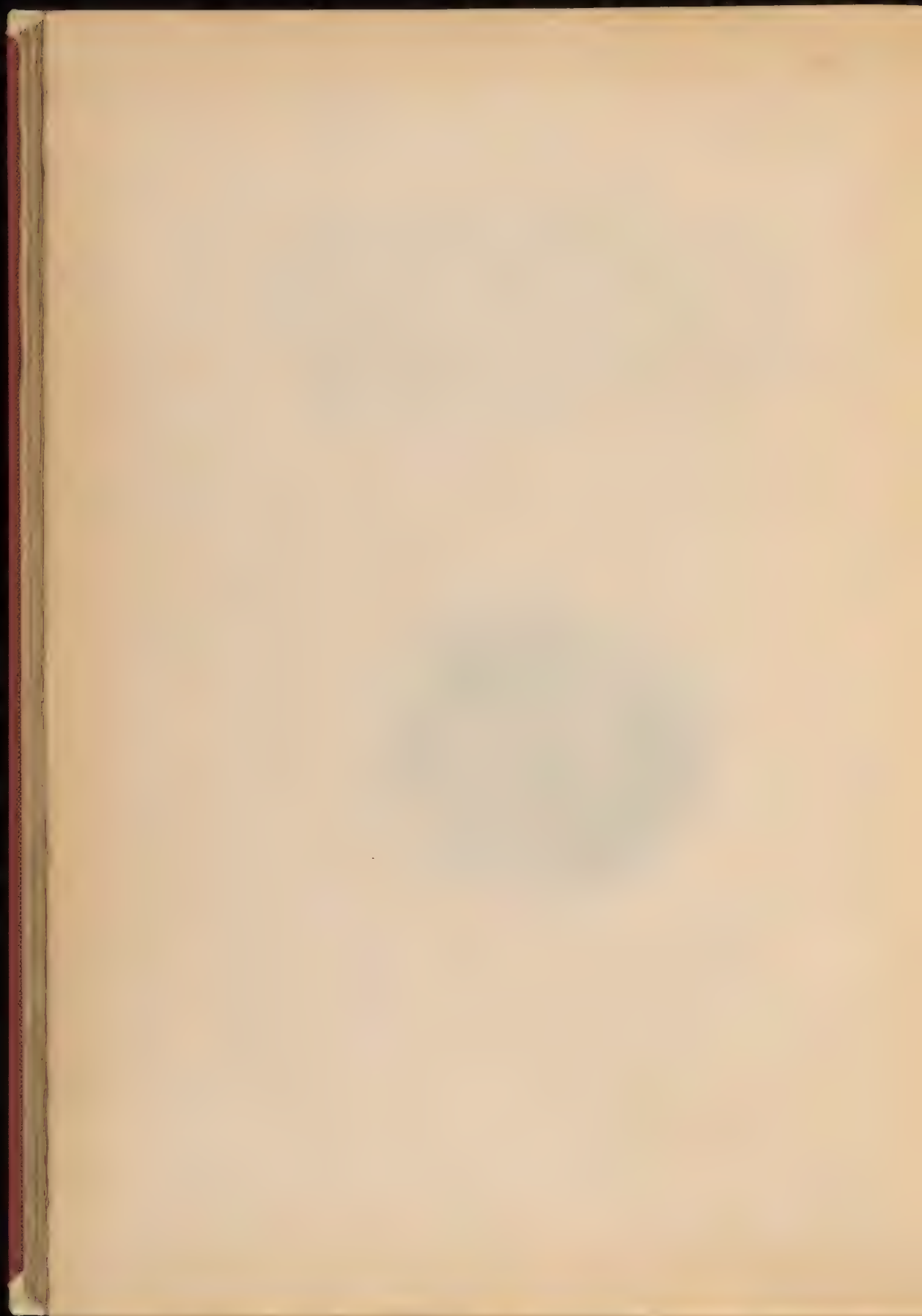
It is for this perhaps that we love them so well, that we call them to us and allow them to become our intimates, take them as consoler and friend

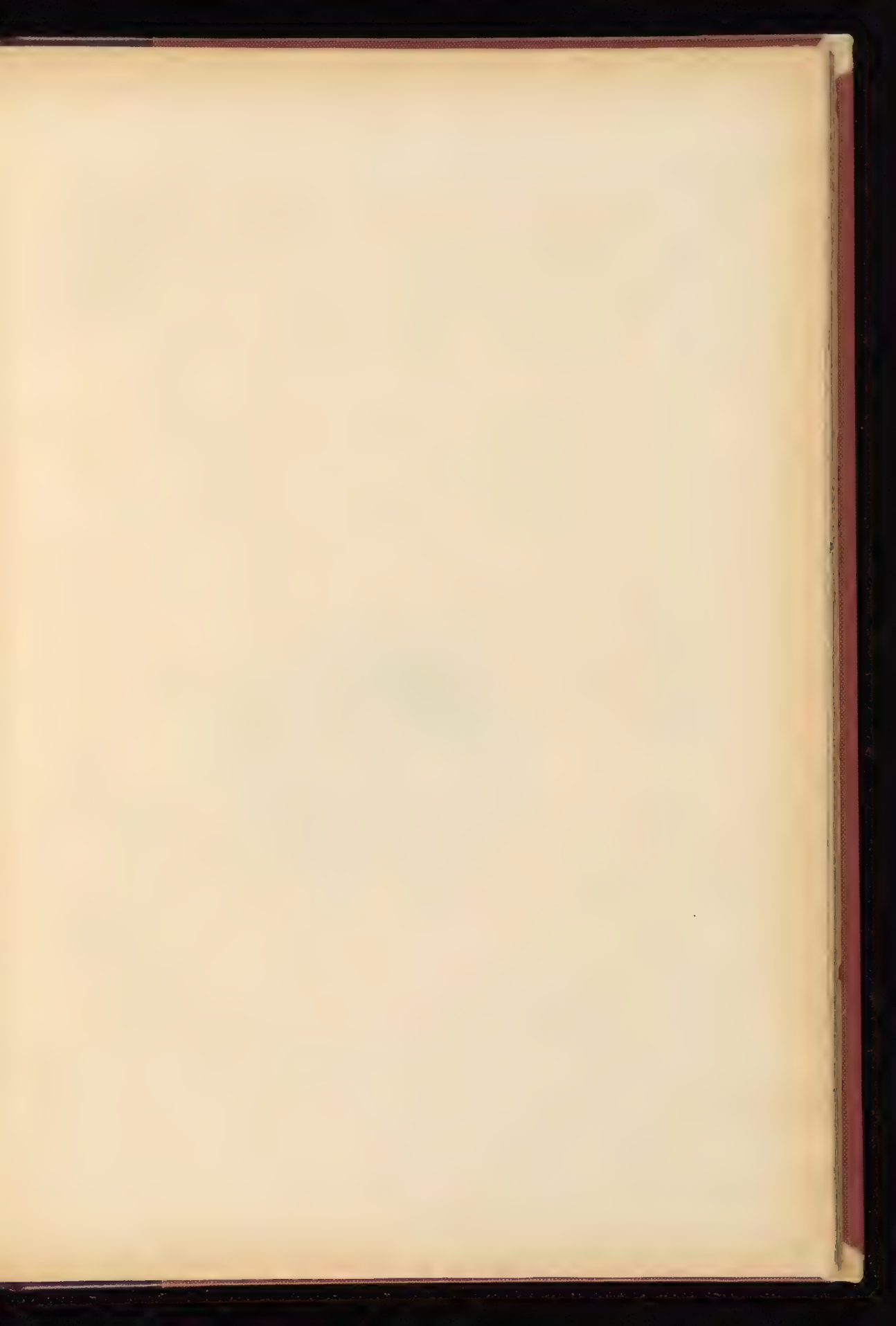
when human pity and friendship have failed. M. Toussenet has written a charming history of these pets to whom we often become so fondly attached. M. Eugène Lambert has painted them. It is always a pleasure to us to reperuse the writer's book and to see again the painter's pictures. The drawings of the painter seem to complete the text of the story teller as the legends complete anecdotic drawings. By the vivacity of his style, by the brilliancy of his descriptions, M. Toussenet is as much painter as poet; by his love of nature, by his manner of understanding and interpreting it M. Eugène Lambert is as much a poet as painter.

SAINT-JURS.



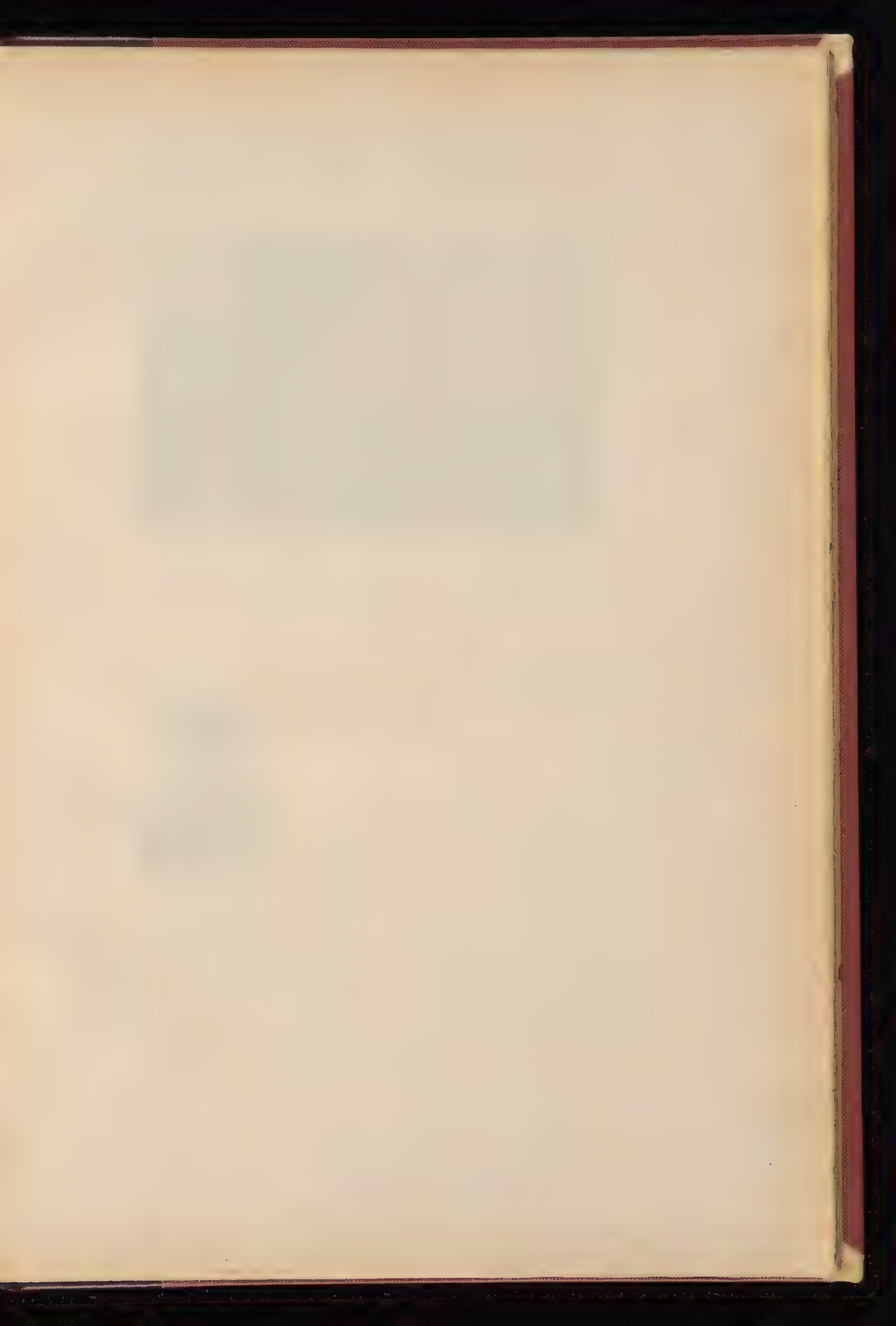








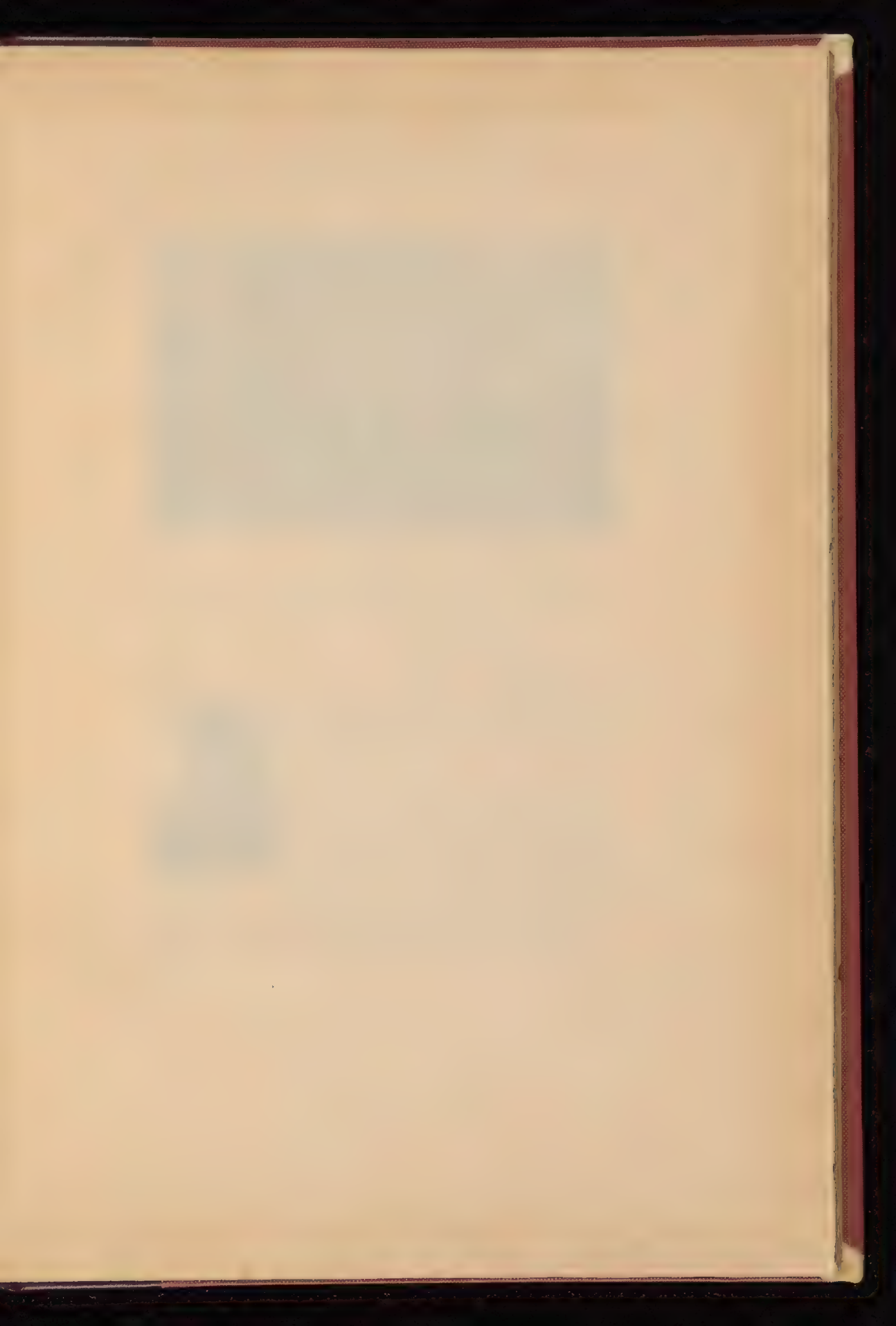










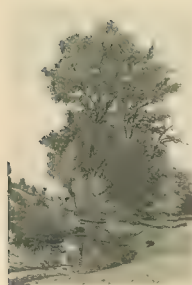








## HENRI HARPIGNIES



Tall, strong and broad-shouldered, Harpignies has the air of one of those vigorous oaks against which the wind has wreaked many of its passions. Thus the eternal fitness of things has willed it, for his whole life was a struggle. Not does this indefatigable combatant loiter over the pleasures of his triumphs, an hour's talk with him sufficing to convince us that he is more militant now than ever. It is a man in whom conviction acquires a particular firmness, who leaves nothing to caprice or hazard.

Every trait, in fact, indicates this nature powerful in resolution, even to his name, which, if we are to credit the theories of Balzac, is not that of a dreamer or of a mystic, but that of a man of will and action. His tanned face, which betrays a life passed in the air and which I have only seen paralleled

among the faces of old sailors, his bright lively eyes which are overhung by heavy eyebrows, his whitening hair still thick and firm, springing out of the forehead like a hedge, the inflexible line of the nose, which is decidedly long, the expression of rustic raillery on the mouth framed in its straight beard, all reveals a being well armed for the battle of life, a being full of health, having a violent filial love of Nature, without any of the reservations which this passion admits in less energetic artists. He love her passionately, and is often stirred by her, but rarely melted. In the glorious landscape art of our time, he is one of the heroics, not one of the elegiacs.



'Tis that, while much younger than his illustrious predecessors, he belongs to that admirable school whose glory can only be compared with that of the school of Haarlem, in the great day of Holland, and which count in its ranks Corot, Rousseau, Diaz, Millet, Dupré; a marvellous school, which signals one of the finest phases of French art, and sends landscapists to the direct study of Nature. To confess the truth, the young people who follow after it are living on it yet,

and owe to it all their merits. But, we should hear Harpignies define the distance which separates it from the Masters! "People make a greater number of cartoons after Nature now-a-days," he cries, with the bitterness of conviction, "they draw her oftener, they look out for the 'patch', they practise brilliant execution, they are contented to be De Kock in literature, Lecocq in music. It was not thus the great painters worked whom I have known."

And, in speaking thus, Harpignies is not the *laudator temporis acti* which the poet satirized. He has all the right in the world to talk this lofty language, because he is, effectively, the last representative of an art far differently

conscientious, elevated, solid from that with which our new-fangled landscapists satisfy themselves. By a certain grandness of impression, he goes up higher yet than the grand masters of whom I have spoken; he ranks with Poussin and even with Ruysdael.

In this, to be sure, there is the specialty of his personal aspirations: but there is also the result of a pictorial education really austere.

We forget quickly. Who remembers now the landscapist Achard? Yet Achard is not dead. It is my privilege to meet him every year in Dauphiny, whither he has retired. He is a magnificent old man, with the venerable head of a saint Peter, and often enough of a saint Peter hardly disposed to open the gates of Paradise. He has been a great painter, one who exercised a serious influence on his time. The Luxembourg gallery possesses a fine canvas of his, and the Museum of Grenoble several important pictures. He was one of the first to excite the revival of etching, and he manages this renovated art in a spirit of ingenuousness and delicacy



which no one has exceeded. It is a flagrant injustice to have spread such indifference round about his name, and to have left him in such silence. But Achard was never a courtier — he was just the opposite — and one might have believed him born on the banks of the Danube if he had not spent his life-time in celebrating the banks of the Isère. In fine, an artist full of dignity, directness and merit, and who seemed cut out to be the master of Harpignies.

It was in his studio, in truth, that Harpignies was placed by his family on arriving in Paris. He was now twenty-seven years old, and the part of his life already past was not without its battles. Belonging to a wealthy family of manufacturers, brought up in the smoke of lofty furnaces, at Valenciennes, in which laborious town he was born in 1819, Harpignies had been destined, like so many others, to the delights of the commercial country-house and to the tranquil joys of chemistry. But he was not of those whose mission is checked by obstacle, who yield to the wills, even of those they respect the most. A man to whom art owes much for the fact now to be stated, and who in other matters was useful in the accompanying train of circumstances, M. Lachèze, of whom the painter Marilhat had been a friend in the East,

aided Harpignies on this occasion to gain his process before the family tribunal; he persuaded the latter not to thwart longer a tendency of such unchangeable character.

Of this professor, Harpignies was the most submissive pupil; the professor loved him sincerely, but his method were not such as to spoil him by over-indulgence. You can judge of this by the following anecdote, which deserves to be preserved in the annals of landscape art. It is needless to state that Achard did not imprison his pupil in the studio; on the contrary he



directed him, without intermission, face to face with Nature. He travelled with his pupil and pointed out himself the sites and the effects of daylight which the latter was to reproduce. On this plan, accordingly, in 1847, the couple found themselves at Crémieux, in a magnificent valley. "You are not to make a mountain of studies," said the master to his disciple, "but two only, on which you may spend several weeks: an effect of dawn and an effect of twilight." Harpignies therefore chose those two *motivi*, and set himself industriously to work, bringing back each evening his two canvases, which Achard looked at out of the corner of his eye, without, however, committing himself to any criticism. One of them was, it must be confessed, very well handled for a beginning. It was a view of a perpendicular rock, lifting itself



like a wall in the midst. The solidity of the stone, the sombre color of the sparse foliage crowning it, the depths of sky receding behind the elevations of the soil, had all been interpreted with remarkable sincerity by the young artist. But a hard trial was destined for him at the close of this important piece of work. In the left-hand corner a slender sapling lifted itself, whose scattered leafage was light as a silver lace floating on the wind. The hand of Harpignies had not yet acquired that sapient delicacy needful for the rendering of this shrub. During a whole week he tried, scraped out, and



began again, persevered, stopped, and risked the spoiling of his sky, cursed himself, and devoted the vegetable to the execration of centuries to come. At length, on the ninth day, saying to himself that after all this spiteful tree occupied very little place in his study, he left it out, in all candor, and effaced its very outline behind a thick coat of sky-blue. This done, he went home, well pleased to have set a neat little lesson to Nature.

But he had reckoned without his host. Hardly was the canvas set in its place when the inquisitorial eye of Achard made a thorough inspection. A strange surprise was expressed in it, then a kind of incredulity, then a still greater astonishment, and at last a positive rage.

"Sir," said he to his pupil, in a voice trembling with anger, "you put your tree in its place to-morrow, or you go back to your relations!"

I have seen this same tree, for Harpignies has preserved that sketch religiously and is glad to show it to his friends. The rebel sapling is there, less ably done than the rest, but after all achieved, on the worn canvas, all teased with continual retouchings. There it is bearing witness both to the pitiless conscientiousness of the master and to the laborious submission of the pupil.

This touch, reported by Harpignies, has moved me more than I could well say. What a lesson for the young school of landscapists to-day! These



latter make no bones of a sapling, nor even of a whole forest. They try to get a generalised view of things, and, that once got, they go away very happy, and show you their enlarged sketches as pictures, just like the painters who believe they are painting por-

traits when they throw up photographs to larger scale. Not that I wish to act here perversely towards the impressionist school, which has often charmed me with its impromptus, whose secret has been taught it by the art of the Japanese. But an artist who is clear of all suspicion of having carried his manipulation too far, Puvis de Chavannes, whom it is needless to do more than to name, being accidentally one day at Charpentier the publisher's, in the presence of one of the prettiest specimens of this fashionable art, made a remark which is at once the most cutting and truest criticism of it. "What a fine middle distance it would make!" said to himself in a tone of conviction the painter of "Ludus pro Patriâ."

That which is the special reproach of Harpignies toward, his younger successors is, that they do not believe in drawing. "They believe that color is enough for them," he says. And yet Corot, whom they recognise as a master, repeated continually: "There are two things in painting, the draw-



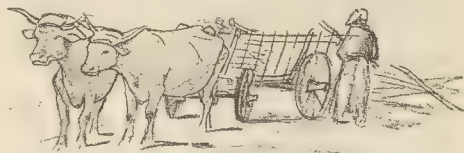
ing and the values." He did not even mention color, which is no longer any difficulty to him who possesses the science of values. Drawing! those who do not know the studies of Harpignies in pen-and-ink could never guess how important to him is drawing. The master figure-painters, whose immortal



designs are owned by the Louvre, — Raphael, if you like, — never sought the line of the visage of the most beautiful Madonna with more obstinacy, or more passion, or more conscience, than Harpignies the silhouette of a tree or the profile of an inclination of the ground. His robust love of all the accessoires of Nature knows well that not one of these is disobedient to certain inflexible laws of harmony and to a certain logic of proportions which is the secret of beauty. That they are here less conspicuous than in the human being or in the conformation of the minor animals, the logic and relations of size aforesaid exist none the less, and are not the less important. The harder they are to seize, the more the artist should

persevere, and the more he will show, when he overcomes them, the force and penetration of his mind. This truth, at least as much a philosophical truth as a pictorial truth, is a real article of faith for Harpignies. He argues for it with the energetic eloquence of an apostle. Observe, that he is just as far from those who "arrange" Nature, as was done in the days of Historical Landscape, as he is from those who embrace the first *motivo* at hand, and

turn over to the public the first, which presents itself to their pencil. He is before every

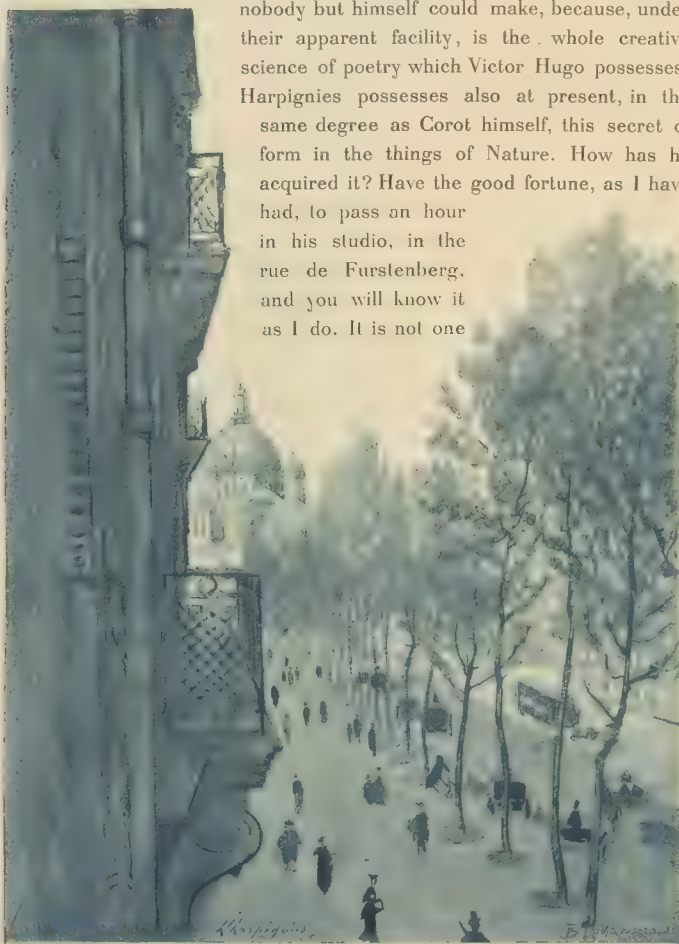


thing, of the grand school which is returning to the direct impressions of things, but he carries these impressions deeper he enters into them, he seeks the synthesis of all. Corot did the same. In the numerous works of his latter years, in that self-indulgence of little pictures which form the astonishment of the ignorant, and make them believe that they recognise a task-work fertility, this synthesis was in reality the synthesis of forty years of toil, face to face with Nature, the secure grasp of the secret of form acquired by incessant study of drawing. They who imagine that they will arrive at

results of the same value without having passed through the same studies are insane. In the "Songs of the sea and the woods", Victor Hugo has printed little bits which seem like puerilities, but which at the same time

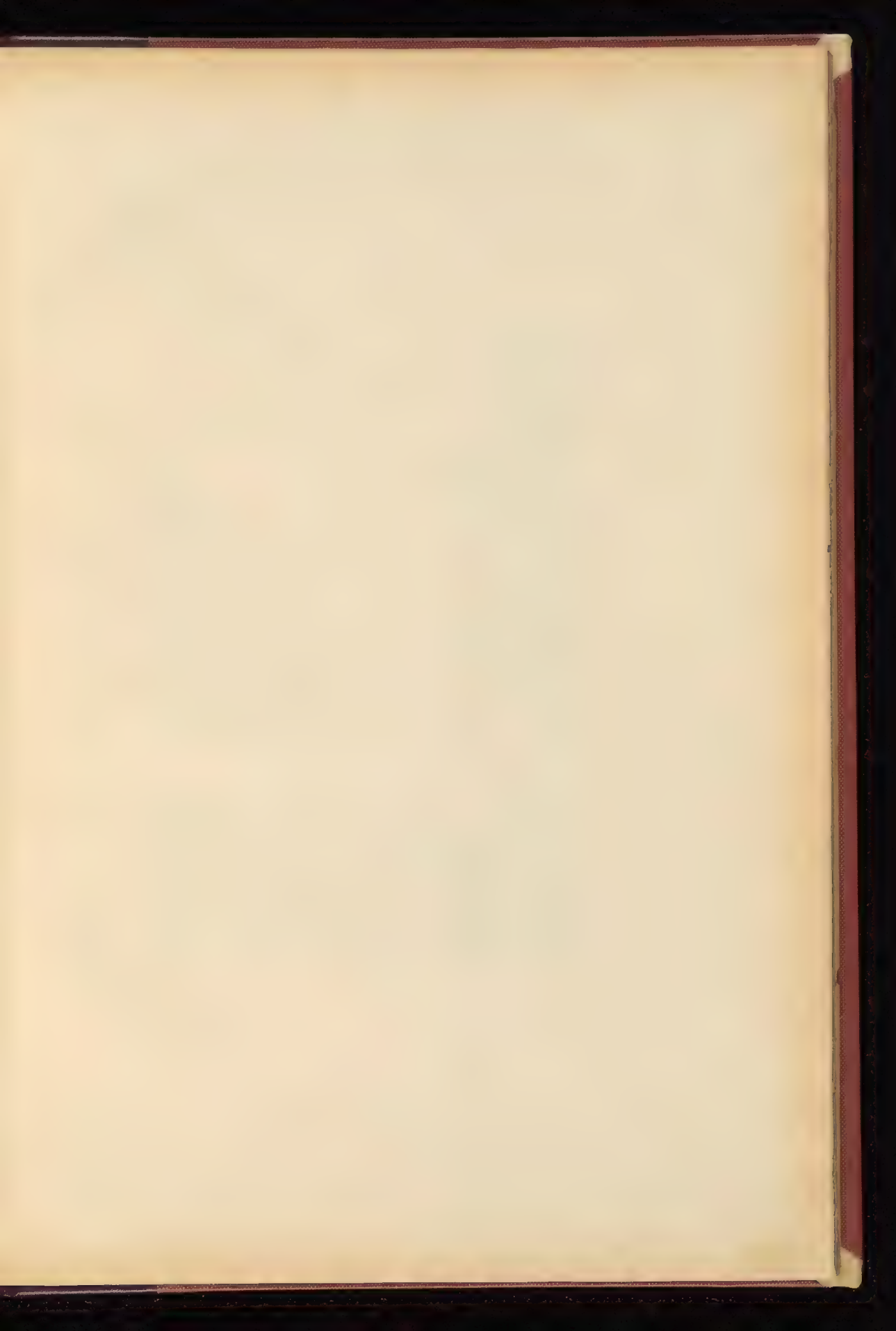
nobody but himself could make, because, under their apparent facility, is the whole creative science of poetry which Victor Hugo possesses.

Harpignies possesses also at present, in the same degree as Corot himself, this secret of form in the things of Nature. How has he acquired it? Have the good fortune, as I have had, to pass an hour in his studio, in the rue de Furstenberg, and you will know it as I do. It is not one



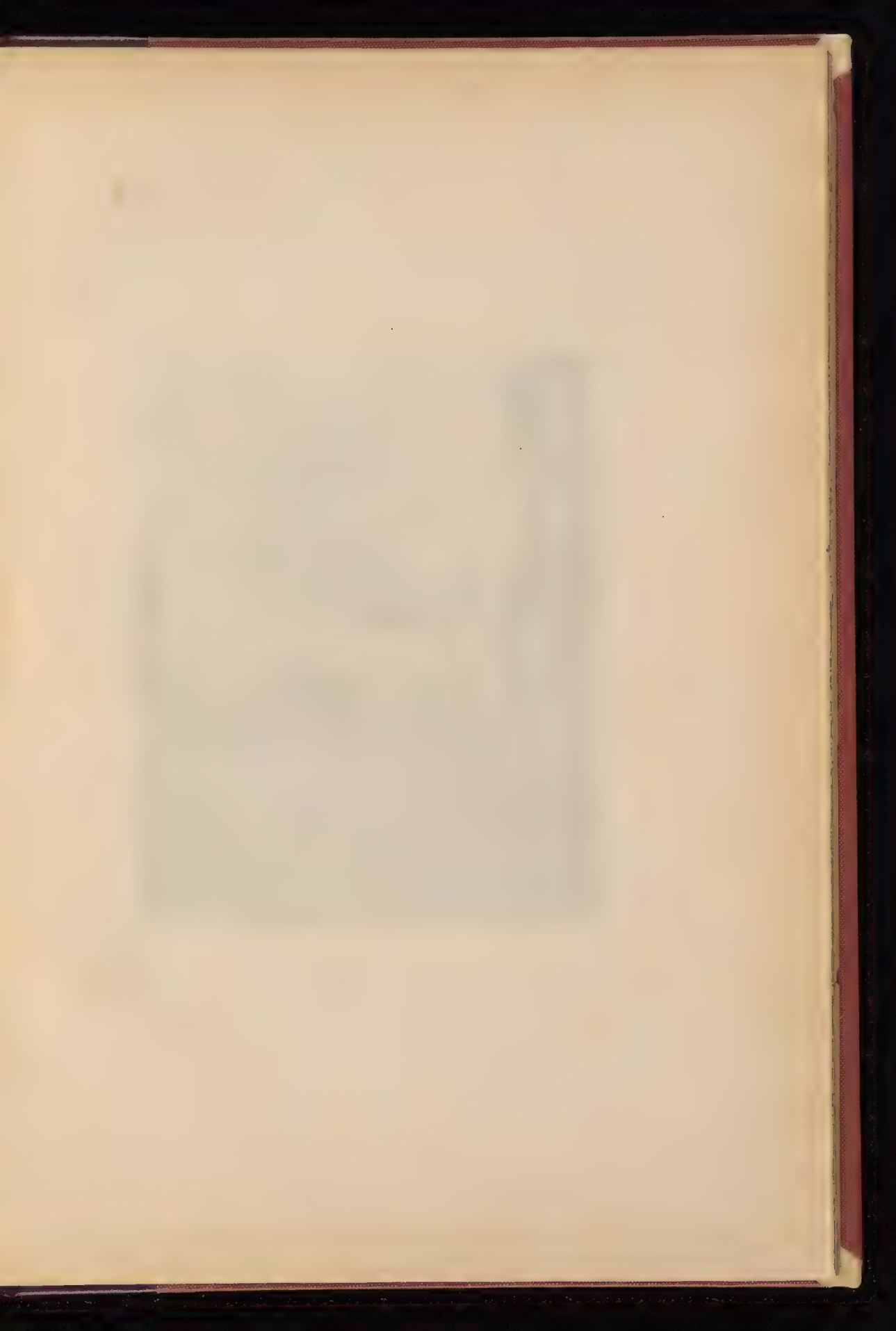






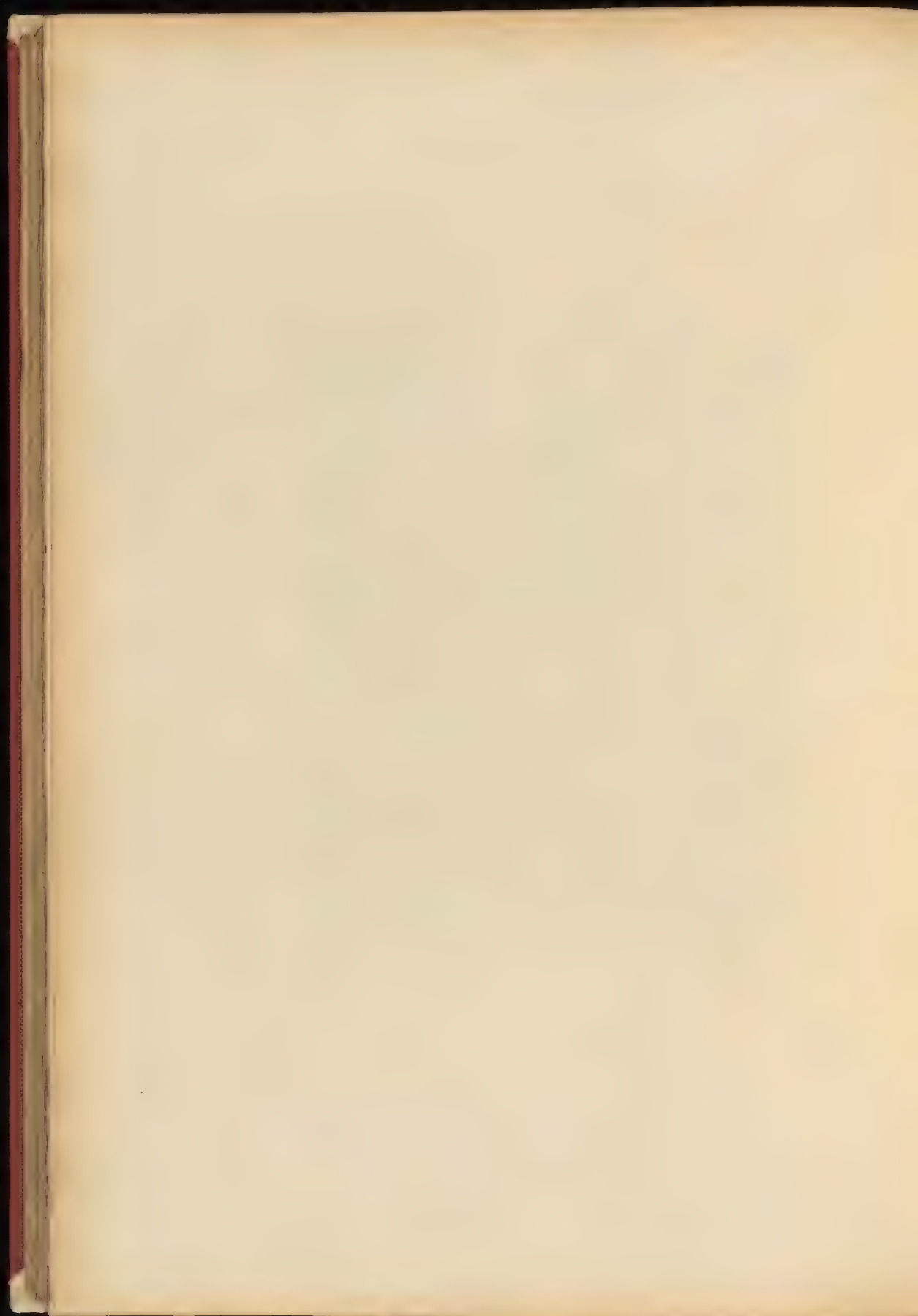






















of those luxurious studios of which fashionable painters make an advertisement of their work, and which seem to say. "See how well I am paid!" No. There are no trophies on the walls, no strangely-formed vases twisting their deformed bellies on tables of sculptured wood, no unpackings of oriental wares reminding you of a slipper-merchant's. A large chamber lofty and square, a simple table with pipes and tobacco. But — a picture-gallery, and an admirable picture-gallery. A whole tapestry of studies, each of which would deserve whole days of study, if politeness would allow you to expand a simple visit into whole years. Corners of forest, outlooks over the plains, hills cutting into the sky, rivulets reflecting the willows — portraits, real portraits of trees of every kind, auroras and sunsets, cornfields set on fire by the sun or vineyards crimsoned by autumn, the freshness of spring among the apple-trees covered with their perfumed snow, the first shiverings of winter among the thatch.

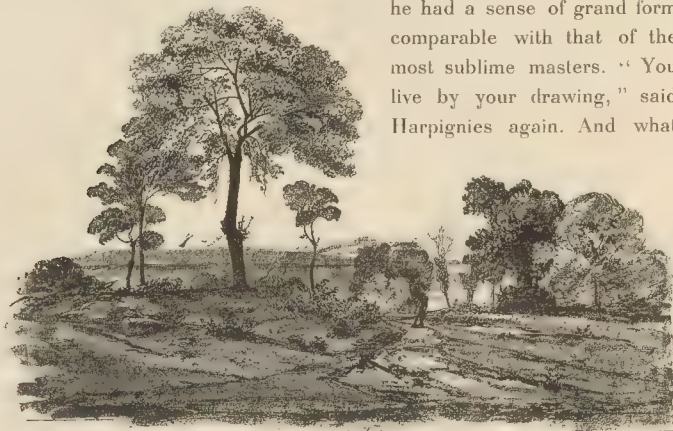
Peaceable  
solitudes under  
creeping



shadows, whatever is real in country life, whatever gives a morsel of real nature, whatever translates the impression of out-of-doors, is there. But you will not find there any study which has become one of the celebrated pictures of Harpignies. They are mere documents, notes, exercises and scales. It will all be serviceable, but it will all take on a better form, and a truer one, because, in Nature, whatever they have said, it is still the beautiful which is the true, and because none but imbeciles look out for the rest. Whoever has found himself, like me, in presence of these formidable witnesses of a long life of labor, will know, as I know, how it is that Harpignies is better acquainted with nature than any one. It is thus that he has learned, as he showed us again in that admirable canvas of the "Banks of the Loing," how the water recedes and unrolls under a sky fretted by trees with waving branches. There is where he learned what touches us so strongly in the "Sunken Road," exposed in 1853 —

his first success — in the "Evening in the Roman Campagna" (1866), which is one of the masterpieces of the Luxembourg Gallery, in the "Wolf's Leap," in the "Road to the Château-Renard," in so many other illustrious pictures whose fame will survive him. For art thus conceived has the privilege of enduring, while easy art is scarcely for any thing beyond the present. Can you guess who was the man with whom Harpignies agreed best in theories of drawing? With Paul Flandrin, whom he had met in Italy. Now if Flandrin was a doubtful genius, we cannot deny that

he had a sense of grand form comparable with that of the most sublime masters. "You live by your drawing," said Harpignies again. And what



he said he committed to writing. For this methodical spirit works his thoughts for himself in journal form, on the margins of a book which I have been allowed to turn over. They are formulated generally briefly, but of a terrible verity, brutal sometimes, but always picturesque. It is to be wished that this curious treasure should not be lost, for it is truly the testament of a great artist. I will describe it for you: a large red notebook which you would take at first sight for the daybook of a merchant exact in his accounts. There are in it very amusing criticisms on contemporary painters, proving that, unlike what happens often with artists completely successful, Harpignies never loses his interest in the movement of art. In this he is quite on a par with Ingres, in whom age could not extinguish his indignations. Confess that this passion victorious over years, incessant



and ever on the alert, is a sign of manliness and of good race, and that nothing is more noble than that in our world!

It were full time, as the song says, that I talked a little of the great aquarellist Harpignies, in a book destined to immortalize the French water-color painters. It was only in 1851 that he began to addict himself to this pictorial form, in which he never had a master, doubtless because he was destined to be one of its masters himself.

Faithful to his principle of preparing himself for his color-work by the study of light and shade, he proceeds by neutral tints. Everyone knows that



none excels him in defining the exact relation between the sky and the water and in rendering the harmony of his masses. It is an enchantment for every delicate eye, for this feeling of the final rightness of things is a privilege for the refined alone. And Harpignies carries to his water-color painting an anxiety for exactitude which betrays his critical disposition. He must get it right, to the very comma, and never did a judge's ear at the concerts of the Conservatory assume more strictness and fastidiousness than his eye. This grand painter, by-the-by, adores music, itself an art of proportions and relations. But he does not like all kinds of music, any more than he likes all kinds of painting or all kinds of literature. You may know already that he has a perfect contempt for operettas. All his affection is saved for the grand classical masters, for Beethoven, for Bach and for Haydn. It is almost useless to talk to him of others, and when he takes his part with the violoncello in some

quatuor, he applies himself to it with religious care, and a soul of absolute conviction. Note particularly that he has chosen the instrument in which perfect accuracy is the hardest to obtain. Just so, in water-color painting, the impossibility of going over the washes, the irrevocable permanence of the least spot, demands as much resolution as is needed to strike a positive note on this difficult musical instrument. And just as the violoncello demands an extreme lightness of hand, so water-color, of which Harpignies has written in his famous note-book : " You must play with your brush as with a pencil-point."



He is no less individual as a water-color painter than as a painter in oil, and that for the excellent reason that he is undoubtedly logical in every manifestation of his mind. In this novel art, we find him again just as attached to drawing, just as unwilling to neglect it for the caprices of "impressionism," just as far removed from the school, which, on the pretence that water-color is an impromptu art, would confine it to the study of rapid effects. Harpignies seeks in it, or forces upon it, an absolute and distinctive character. What he asks from it, more than in his oil-paintings, is the freshness of color inherent in the employment of water, a greater transparency, — something quite as precise, but more aerial. With this distinction made, the painting is the same, always a broad and powerful



interpretation of things, with the same energetic power, the same manliness in the execution. These qualities are so inherent in his work that I believe the aquarelles of Harpignies are

destined to acquire a high value in the future.

In this rapid study, I have tried to characterise the manner of Harpignies' painting, to make known his ideas and to make known his true self, rather than to trace what people agree to call a biography. That biography is written in the catalogue of yearly exhibitions, from 1853 down to the present time, in our public collections, and in the memory of all who love painting and follow its progress. It is almost all there, because, like all the true artists, who in this are like the happy



nations, Harpignies has no history, or, better, his history is that of his works, into which he has poured all his soul, his passion, and his life. In this advertising world, where we see people who would prefer to be calumniated rather than not he talked about at all, Harpignies is a modest and a silent man. He knows his reward to be a higher one than in the useless bruit which is made around certain names. Having triumphed by his single will, he expects nothing except from his own courage. He has been, like almost all the great painters of the day, the object of the persecutions of the Institute, which, in 1863, even after the grand success of his "Sunken Road" and his "Wood-path on the banks of the Allier," closed the Salon to two of his works, of which one, the "Virgil," is simply a masterpiece. The "Sleep of the Mower,"

by Puvis de Chavannes, had the same fate, though it was an admirable poem. Harpignies was not discouraged; but I must blame him for having cut up one or two canvases, in a moment of anger, because the jury rejected them. This childishness can hardly be comprehended in a man having the consciousness of his powers. But it

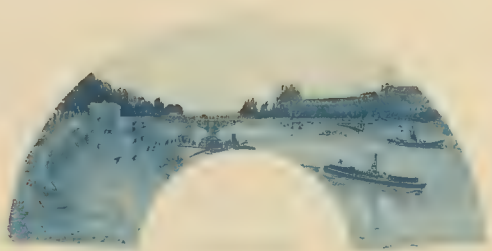


was a moment of weakness. The public was slow in recognizing Harpignies. The deeply masculine and rather austere poetry of his work could not assert its authority all at once. The public, always deserving to have Panurge for its shepherd, waited for the award of a medal before it would admire. But the medals came along, in 1866, in 1868, in 1869, and the Cross of Chevalier in 1875, while awaiting that of Officer, which cannot tarry much longer. Then Monsieur Society opened his eyes; Monsieur Society deigned to perceive that England was not the only country to possess a school of water-color artists, and that the grand art of landscape-painting was not altogether dead with Corot. Now the reputation of the painter is consecrated. It can only grow greater, because it rests on those solid qualities which do not fatigue admiration. And then, it needs but to talk with Harpignies to perceive that care for the present does not hide the horizon of his noble aspiration.

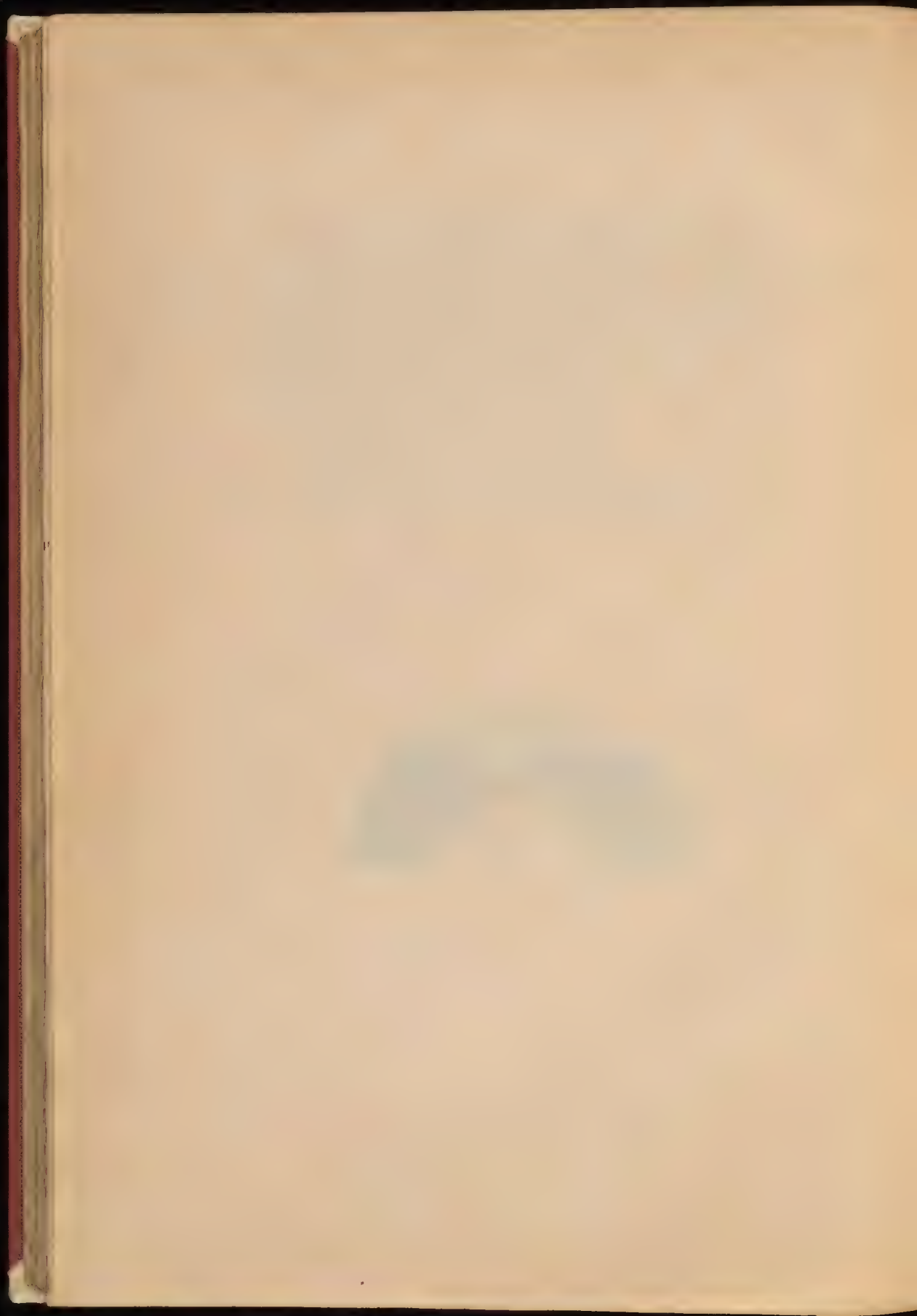
He is of those who tempt immortality and whom immortality tempts. His place in contemporary art has ever been an enlarging one. Some among the young are beginning to profit visibly by his work. And if he has not formed a school, properly speaking, around himself, it is because the austerity of his principles, and the conscientiousness of his teachings, would not be made to satisfy the thirst for prompt success which characterizes our young painters. But the favor with which these are now rewarded, and which is a sign of the times, will be of short duration. Picture-buyers will perceive one day or another that you are not making a Corot merely because you are vapory, nor a Rousseau merely because you are savage.

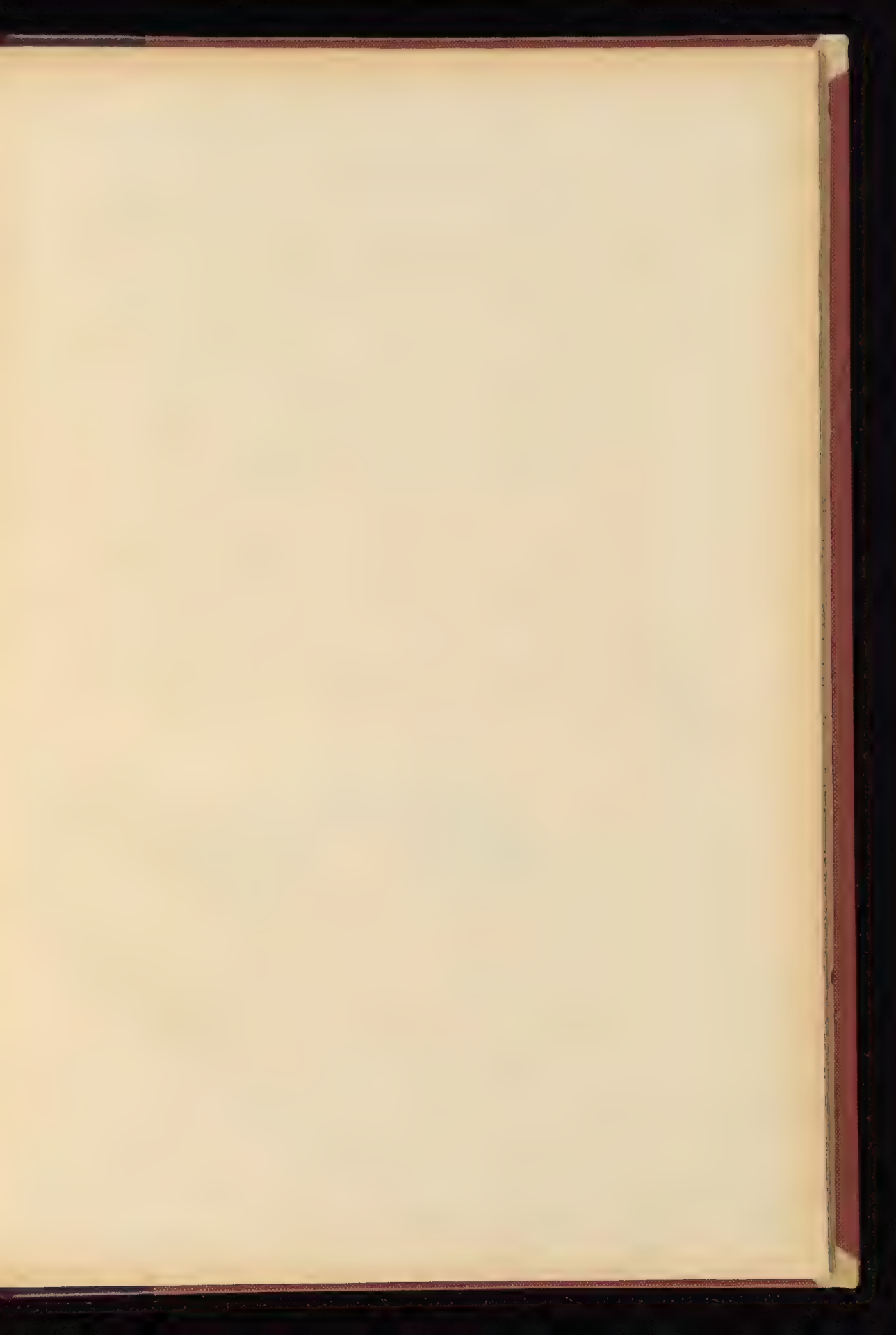
Then perhaps they will say to themselves that it is necessary to arrive at the painting of the recalcitrant sapling or renounce art, according to the decree of Achard, the aged master of Harpignies.

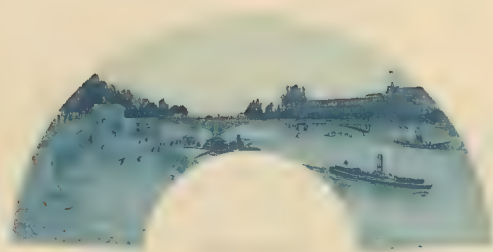
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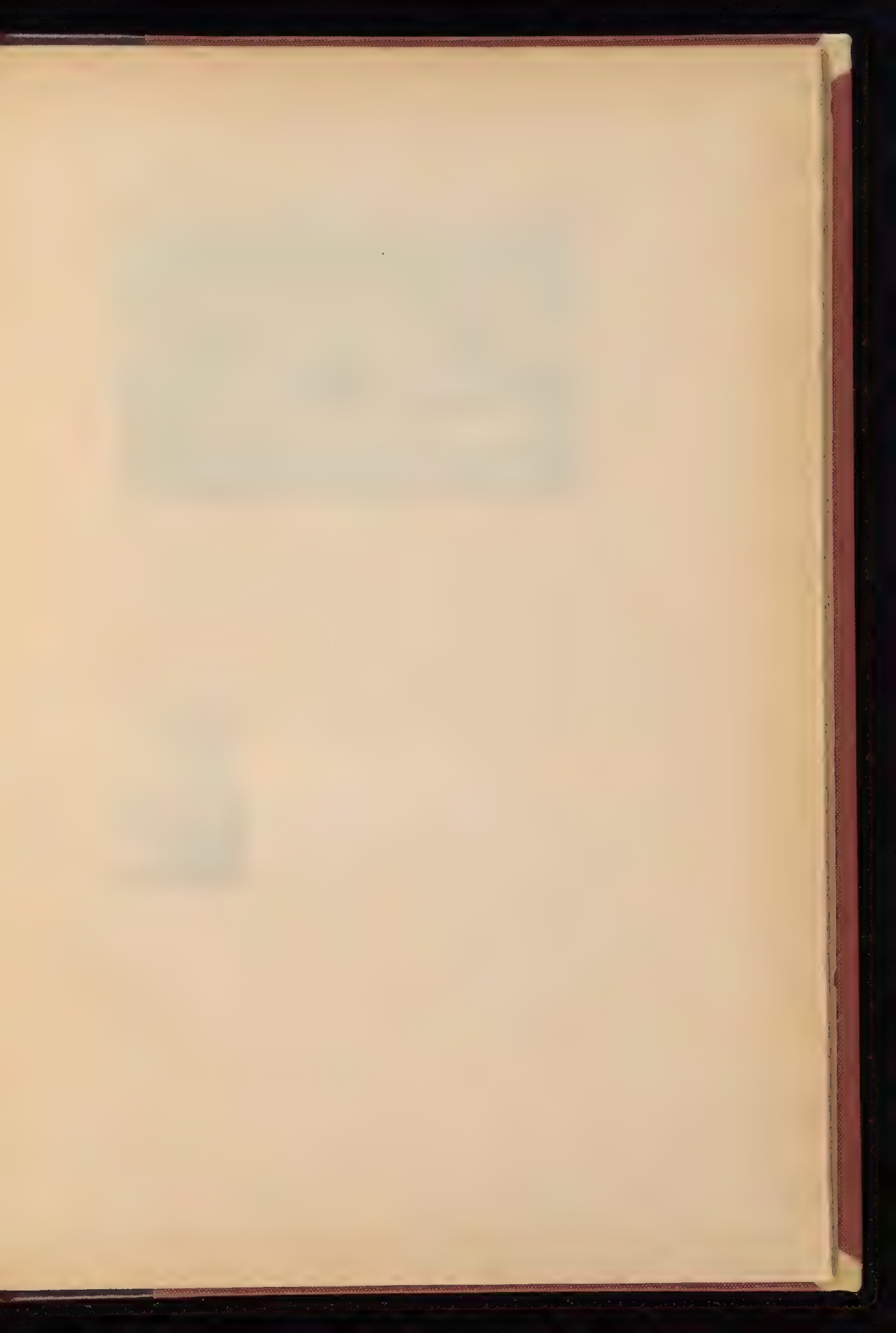






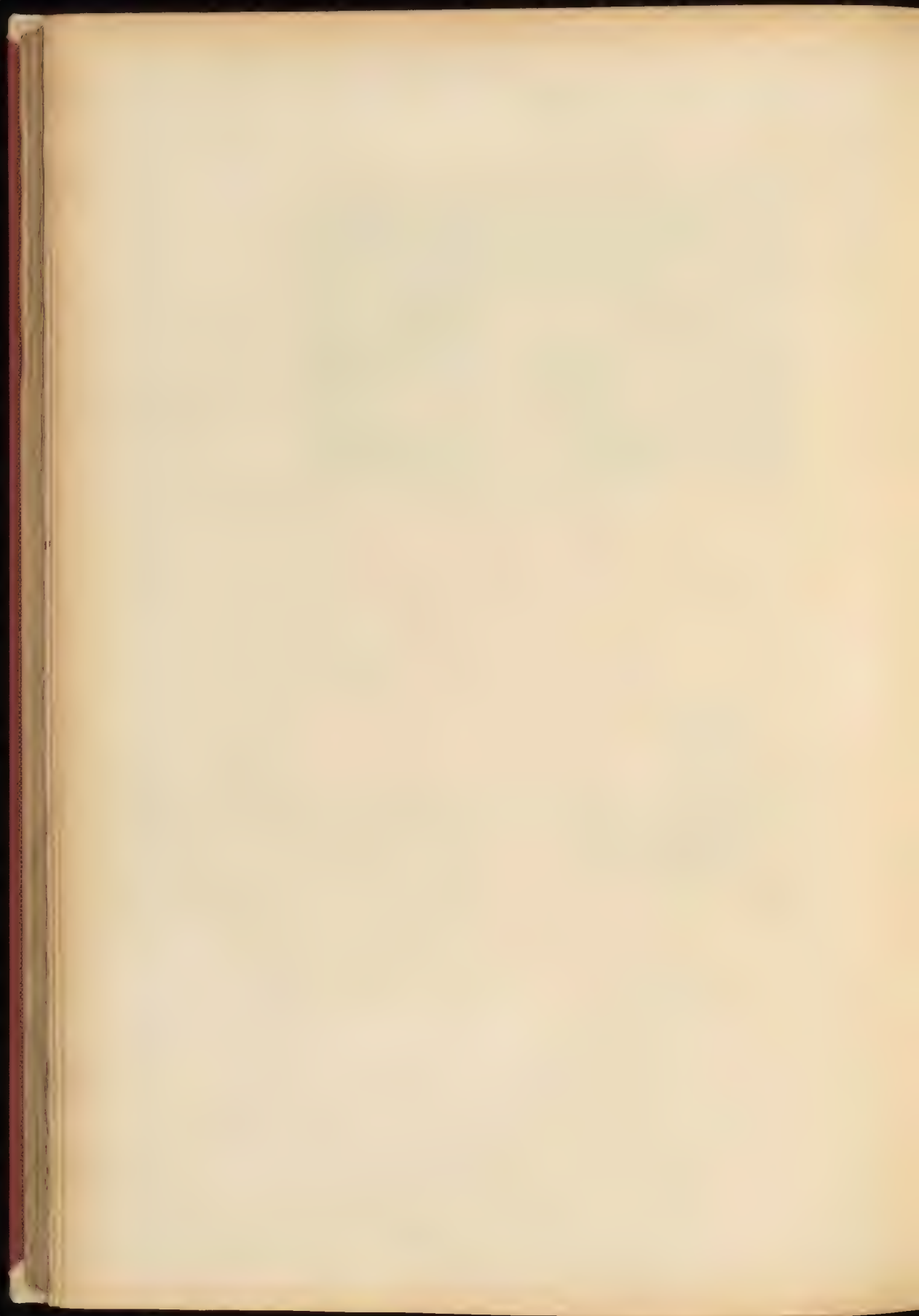


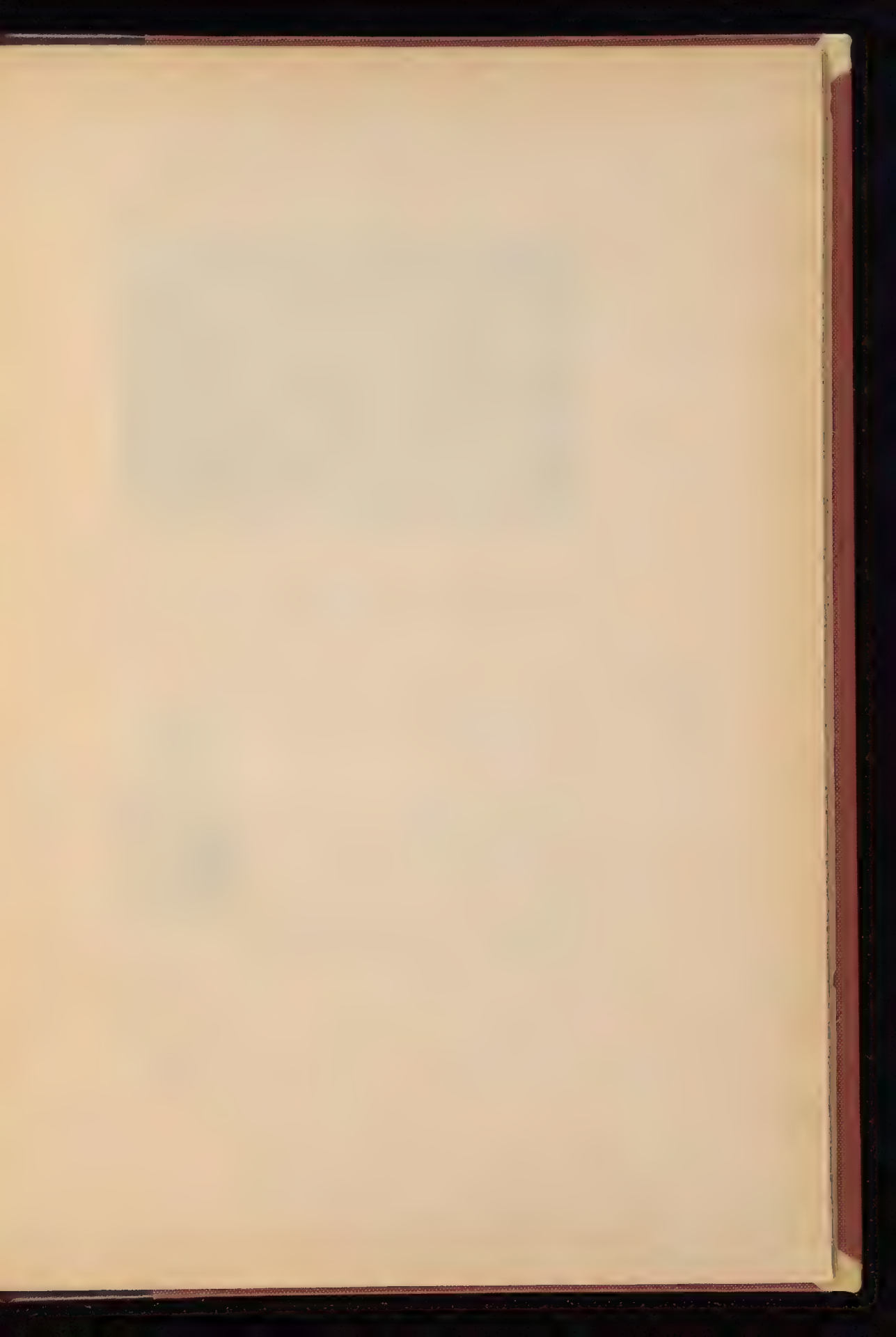


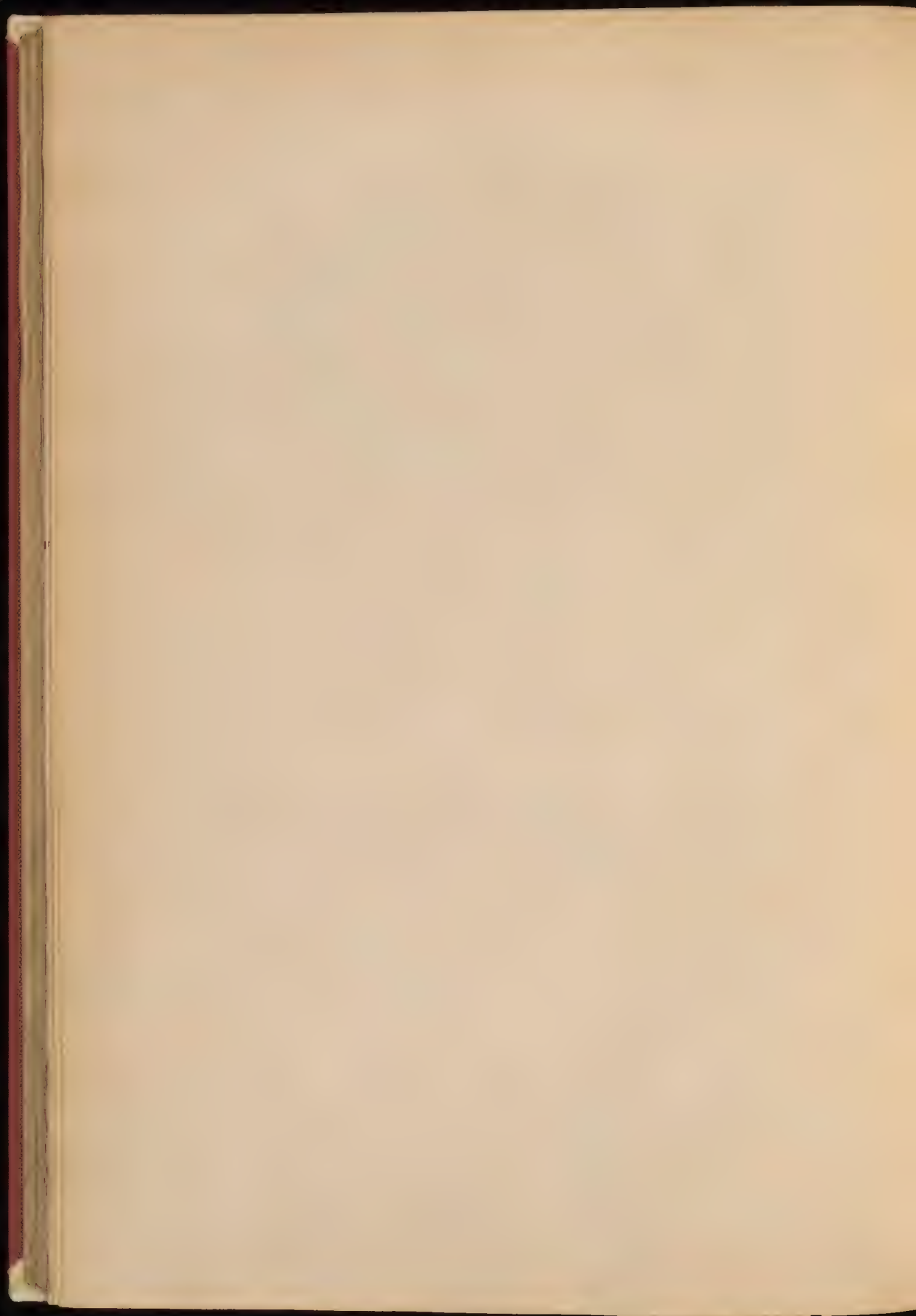
















## ÉDOUARD DE BEAUMONT



This is not intended to be strictly a biography. I desire, taking into consideration the character of the personage that I have to define, to make a study in which the fanciful and unforeseen shall hold the principal parts. Precise dates, chronological events would paralyze me when searching for that which has not already been said. It is but just to add that were I to attempt to recount in detail the artistic career of M. de Beaumont I should quickly find myself in want of material. Effectively, this painter who would have led a charmed life in the paths where eighteenth century art fondly strayed, would perplex the memorialist who should try to follow him day by day. Like happy nations he has, no history or, if he has none know the particulars. He paints, he creates works that are variously

classed, but that I find interesting because they are produced without affectation or pretension. They exist. They live in spite of the austere horizons where the critic's eye is placed, that tries to be severe at an epoch where severity is but disguised hypocrisy.

*Sans fard*, I will say that M. de Beaumont is a poet for whom the eternal feminine hold all the delights that humanity seeks. He has sung of woman. He has made her, but always a little maliciously the center of his conceptions, the pivot of his intentions. Like all adorers of form he has placed high in the azure the pedestal where towers audacious, superb, divine the being superior by her weakness, before whose throne all earthly powers kneel.

Here it will be well to open a parenthesis to explain in a few lines when was born and where was developed this recommencer — who is not the recommencer or continuator of some one — desirous to translate upon canvas that which Clodion realized when his passionate fingers animated the clay.



M. de Beaumont whose position, hopes and ambitions threw him in a fastidious artistic coterie never was drawn to antique heights. He looked much

more for the gallant note in art than for its tragic accents. Not that he felt himself unable to comprehend the intoxication of sterile sacrifices, but the contrary surely. It was a question of tendency that the haughty solemnity of the painters of his time were unable to modify. He was if but in a slight degree out of place in the midst of these resolute wrestlers who, in the full expansion of healthy romantic movement, rushed into the arena and were enraged to conquer the last tenets of classic art. Still young, he came in contact with Delacroix, Delaroche and Scheffer, bearing the standard of the new art. Upon the passage of the latter he quivered with generous ardor and became enthusiastically infatuated to return so soon after to the *Mie, ô gué!*

That was a happy time when de Beaumont worked next door to Isabey, in one of the ateliers of the avenue Frochot, to-day celebrated, from where so many brilliant pages have come forth. Regretted times that of the *vache enragée* and of uncertain future. A time of heedlessness of sacrifices and of

renunciations. Times that for those that have known them seem a lost paradise of flown-away illusions.

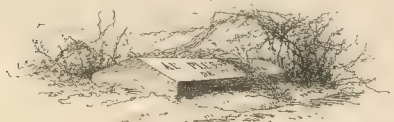
A certain spring day, about six o'clock in the afternoon, in the midst of the revolution of February 1848, M. T. entered Isabey's atelier where de Beaumont was with five or six art students. He held in his hand a water-

color of Gallait, the Gallait of the *Art et Liberté*, who also lived avenue Frochot, and he said :

" I have just bought this for a thousand francs, the artist com-

menced it this morning." The price was enormous for that time and all those there understood that the wily merchant was thus advertising himself by paying a good price for this water-color thus obtaining, at once, the consideration of all the colony of the avenue Frochot. In my notes, notes that I have been accumulating for twenty years, I find than in 1850 M. de Beaumont made twenty water-colors for Russia, ordered by Juste, of Saint-Petersburg. A little later another serie of ten compositions for the Emperor Nicholas. Since then their vogue has increased, and this bizarre, unsociable though charming painter of whom we write has increased his artistic baggage which goes, piece by piece, over the entire world.

The vehicules that serve for these migrations are multitudinous. Now it is merchants that carry them, and again make-believe amateurs who purchase an artistic object as they would bank stock, when a perspective rise is probable. To those *Mécènes à la petite semaine*, I will devote a special paragraph later. M. de Beaumont has had the good fortune to deal mostly with merchants and not with this variety of person-nages, these amateurs who should have to describe them as they are a La Bruyère. To return to the amateur, I will try to so sketch him that



the original will be recognizable. There is amateur and amateur. The amateur of water-colors is not the impassioned lover, so rare today, but he who only through vanity pays a large price. He presents a particular character. With rare exceptions he is generally annoying and in the way. He arrives in the painter's studio unexpectedly, in the midst of a sitting, interrupting the work. He becomes excessively flattering to the female models, talks loud, moves continually, and trots zig-zag round his protégé — the artist — whom he besets. He gets in his light, sprinkles his cigarette ashes on his colors, or yet more absurdly touches everything and disarranges the stuffs that are posed, a crime, a breach of good breed-



ing, finally, when the light fades so that he can no longer attitudinize before the atelier mirrors, he seems on the point of leaving. Alas! he produces the effect of wet fire-works, he won't go off! He coughs and once more digest what breathing air may remain. Why does he stay? Ah! yes, why does he stay? He is waiting for a friend whom he wishes to present to the artist, or the amateurs' friend that is the acme. I do not know who it was that said "these people are the

vermin of ateliers." From these unreasonable relations, where the rich man's vanity plays the principal part originate, among painters, the actual large prices, based on the nullity of the buyer and the ennui he causes the painters.

This digression has carried me away from my subject and broken the thread of my discourse. I unite the broken thread and continue the interrupted discourse.

M. de Beaumont is happier in ideas than in execution. You will find in the canvases that he has composed, in the water-colors he has painted, more power of subjects than logical development of these subjects.

Studied elegance in a delicate form delights him in a supreme degree.



Was it not he who imagined to offer to a superior and clever woman, "*quelque chose dans presque rien*." This was a big emerald scarabee, nested in a natural rose, the leaves of which were strewn with brilliant dew-drops in real diamonds.

In reality a strange nature this painter of gallant adventures. One would imagine him devoted to all kinds of sport, and to all the prettiest women; living in a sumptuous mansion, giving entertainments and seeking adventures in city by-streets and country lanes; cavalier, quick even to brutality, impertinent even to insolence, a heart-breaker!



How far from the truth is this fiction, de Beaumont lives like a misanthropist, far from the crowds that he despises and the noise he dreads, shut up, locked into a dwelling to which his intimates can with great difficulty find entrance. But once they have made good their entrance, as soon as recognised how at once the sullen aspect gives place to one of kindness, dread to wit. The frank and cordial hand shake is quickly exchanged, and then what an overflow of animation is let loose, with jokes and sparkling witticisms. Clever appreciations upon his contemporaries art, with anecdotes that become his-

tory under the warmth and geniality of the talker. It is like hearing a wise man, one of those beings who have seen many, listened much, and retained more. Having awakened from the dreams and illusions that humanity ordinarily reserves for those that she would arm for battle, de Beaumont shuts himself up with a certain personal philosophy.

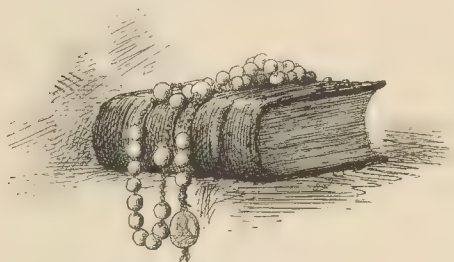
This curioso, this type in the midst of a social life where one impression might serve to resume an epoch is not only an epicure of the brush, but also of the pen. Before he commenced the series of special books, of which the first, *L'Épée et les Femmes*, lately published by Jouaust, he published some very scholarly studies, not however pedantic, in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*.

To him is due those attractive studies on the arms of Napoleon III, on the Comte de Nieuwerkerke's collection, of those of Sir Richard Wallace, and of M. Spitzer. He has also written reports, monographs, and edited analytical catalogues of different choice collections, always excepting his own.

Like all well balanced men, M. de Beaumont mixes the analysis of things with the psychology of souls. All that he sees interests him and all that interests is immediately noted and classed. Thus the grain that is to serve for future sowings is already waiting in the store-house. When the favorable moment arrives, this grain, the hope of the near future, will go carried by the « *geste auguste du semeur* » to fructify the furrows where the next harvests are slumbering.

For the benefit of the friendly reader — and how can a reader be other-

wise than friendly? — I copy unknown to the writer and without the artist being aware of it this pretty pastel of a parisian model :



“ The woman model, the real model or one only for the head, that is the pretty crea-

tures of from eighteen to twenty five years, who poses for us dressed or undressed are rarely punctual, they come nine times out of ten late to their sittings.

“ The cold, heat, ice, rain and even the bright sun are pretexts with them for arriving after the hour agreed upon. This is the bad side of the medal; but the other side shows something altogether charming.

“ There is in the careless improvidence of these young women, living from day to day, without thought of the future a peculiarly noisy charm. They represent to us the female nature in its entirety with its extreme desire to please according to the most coquetish acceptance of the word.

“ In December they come to us smiling al the same, though their hair is powdered with snow or beaded with frost. There are those that are charming thus.

“ In April they bring us the first lilacs of the season, only holding up



their cheek to be kissed for their trouble. It is these giddy heads that during the dull days of the dark autumn and winter months preserve us from the spleen by their gaiety, their bursts of laughter, their chattering and songs.

"It is about half past ten o'clock that ordinarily commences the day of these charming young persons who are gracious enough to serve us as models.

"At last she is here! Once quieted by her arrival, we prepare, before the midday breakfast, our afternoon's work. First we indicate the pose which she is to give us during the rest of the day, or if we are still undecided, we try with her, seeking to find a new gesture or subject in different kinds of costume.

"Here, my little one, turn thou! — as a general thing we thee and thou these little friends :

*Honni soit qui mal y pense!*

— Here, turn thou; and

we arrange in a thousand

different ways on the

pretty resigned creature

all sorts of precious bits,

old Italian velvets with

delicate reflection or Asiatic stuffs embossed in gold.



"We wrap up the lovely girl in indian gauzes or japanese satins composing thus unexpected pictures in real dreamland costumes.

"At other times we dress the dear little thing in the sprightly costumes of the last century, of the time of the ribbon-decked shepherd's crook, and flower baskets, where the too tightly fitting waists throw into prominence nature's charms.

"Thus dressed out certain *Parisienne* with complexions like a Bengal rose, little mutinous noses, and small feet — you see them from here — are real jewels that we secretly dote upon.

"Woe to the painter who openly, seriously loves them, for afterwards the seductress will pose no more for him, and refuses to allow any other woman than herself to enter the atelier.

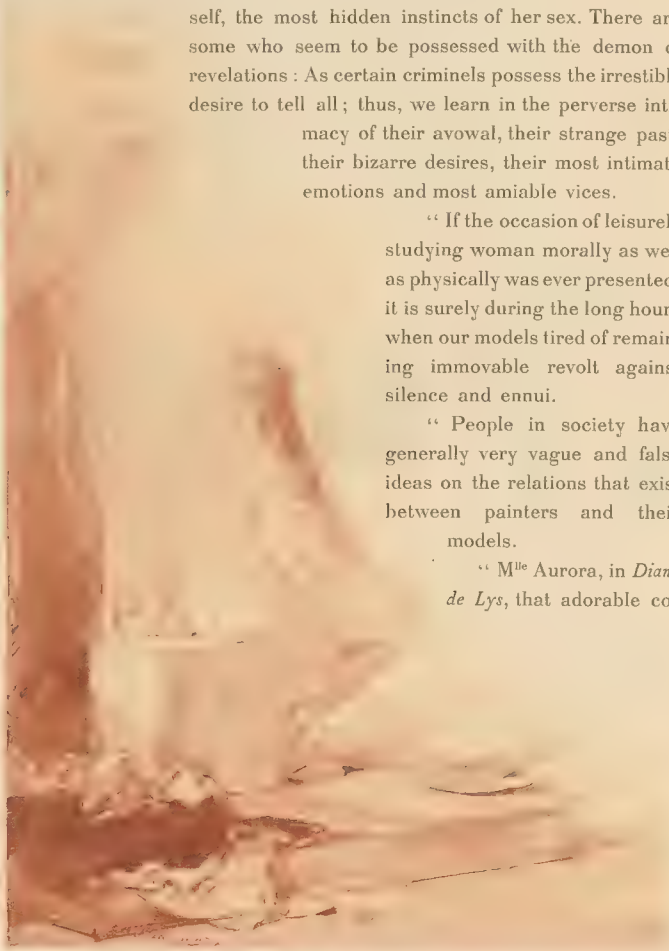
"If it is question of a model simply for the ensemble, it is the same thing although the *mise en scène* is different. The handsome girl, costumed like a statue, lets loose her golden or burnished auburn hair, and puts

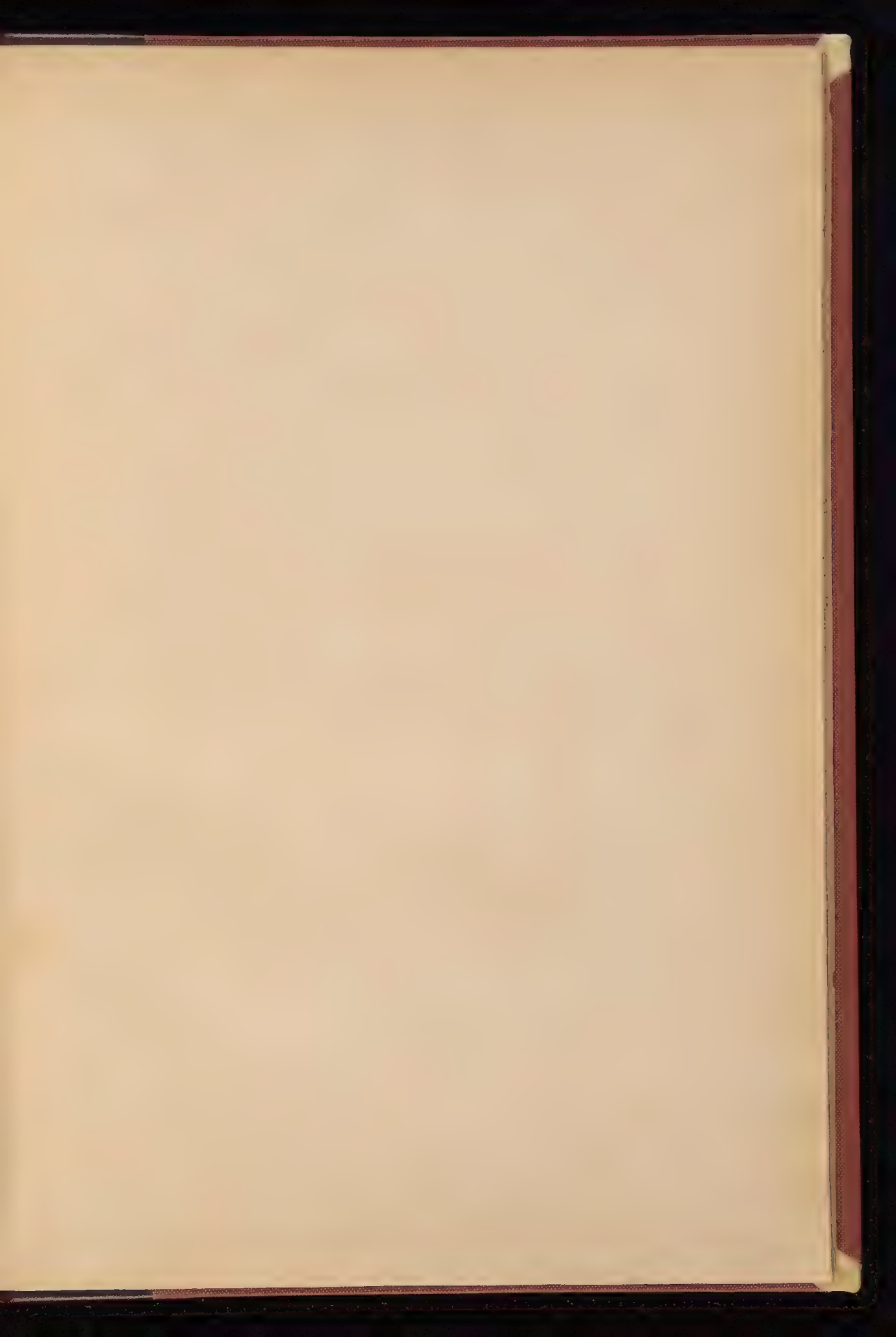
forth without scruple in all her beauty the woman's seductions. She speaks, she *minaudef* as it were with the exquisite flexibility of her body. Afterwards having no more charms to unveil, she denounces, to divert herself, the most hidden instincts of her sex. There are some who seem to be possessed with the demon of revelations : As certain criminals possess the irresistible desire to tell all ; thus, we learn in the perverse intimacy of their avowal, their strange past, their bizarre desires, their most intimate emotions and most amiable vices.

" If the occasion of leisurely studying woman morally as well as physically was ever presented, it is surely during the long hours when our models tired of remaining immovable revolt against silence and ennui.

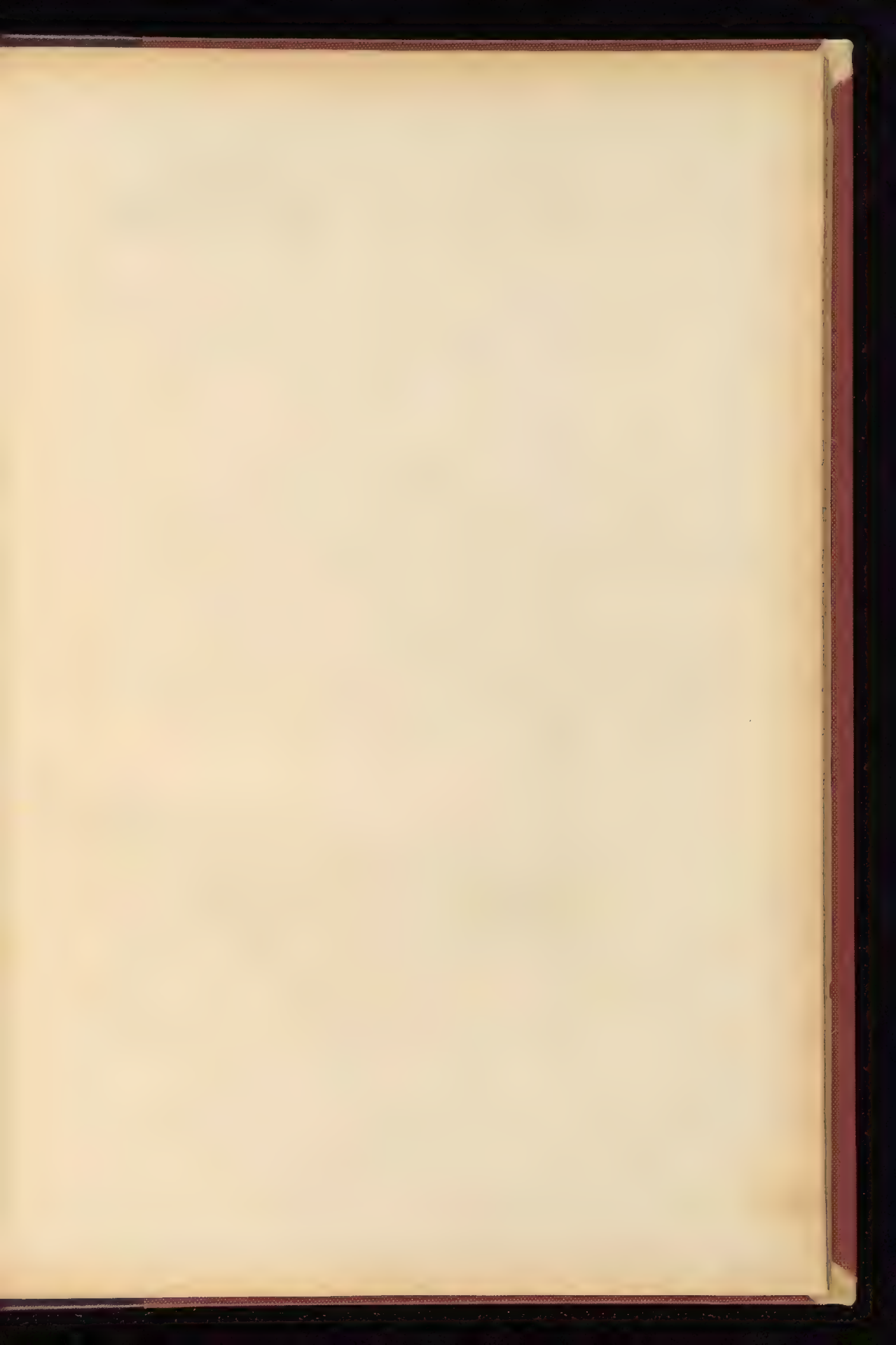
" People in society have generally very vague and false ideas on the relations that exist between painters and their models.

" M<sup>lle</sup> Aurora, in *Diane de Lys*, that adorable co-



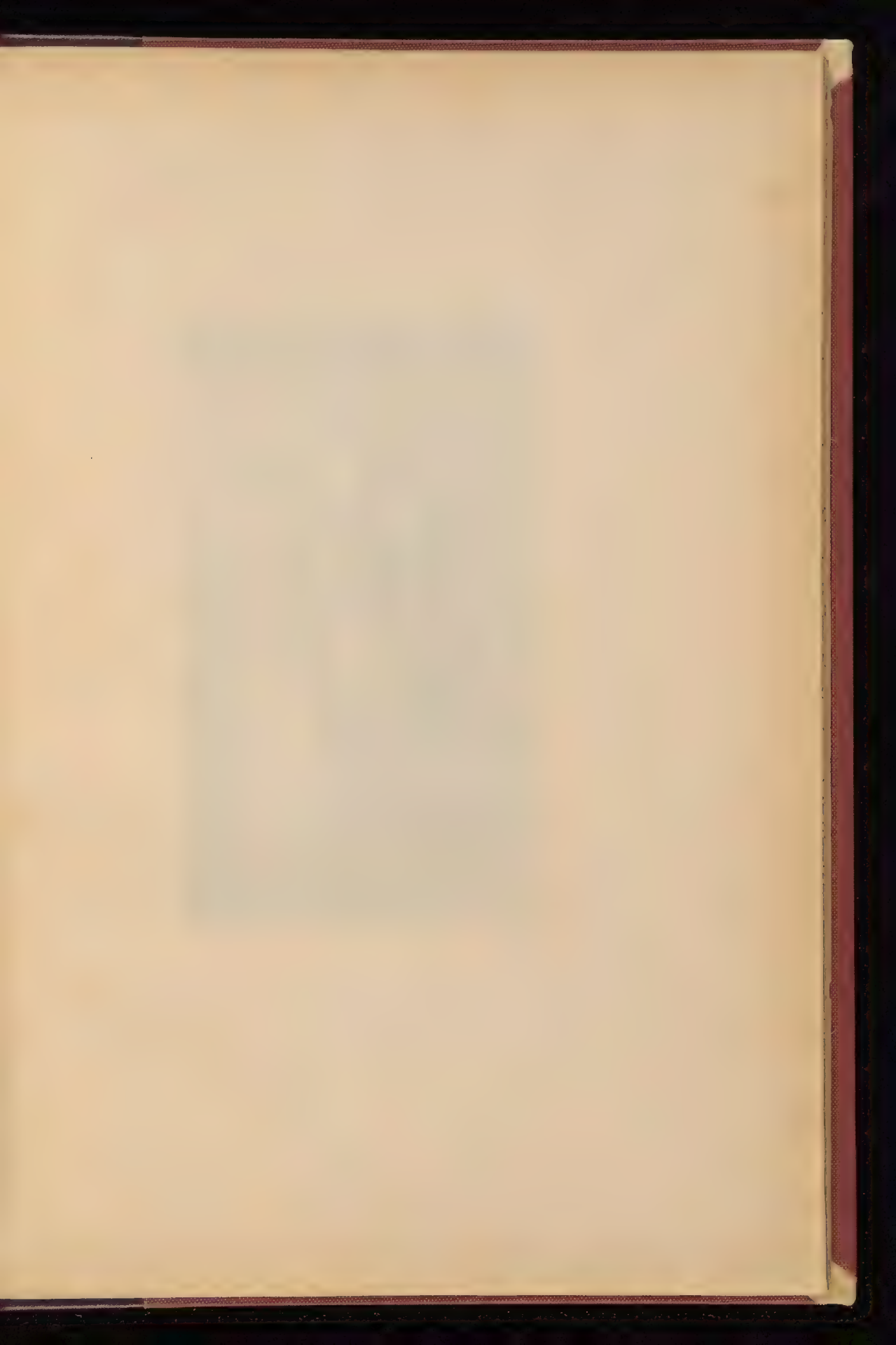






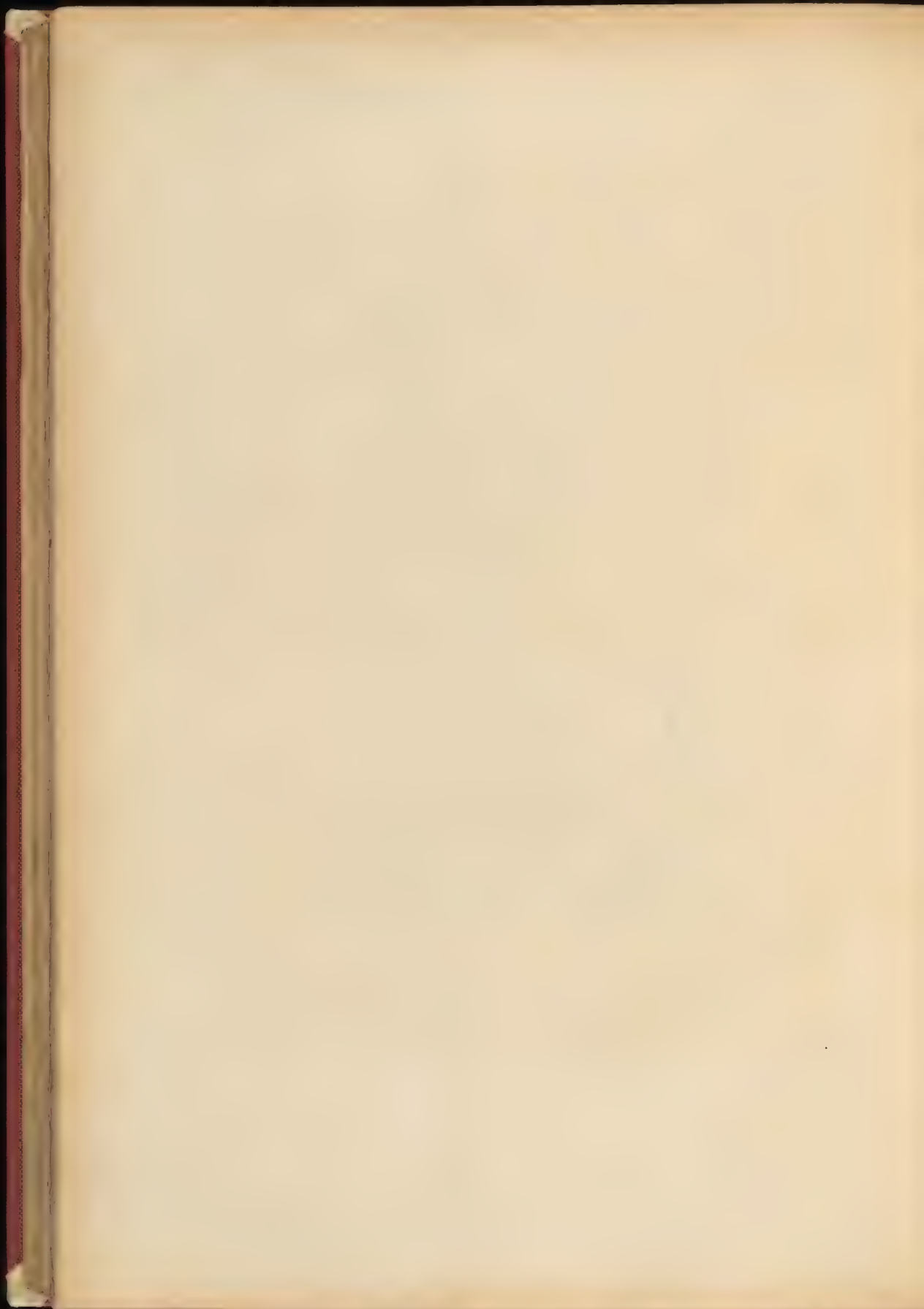


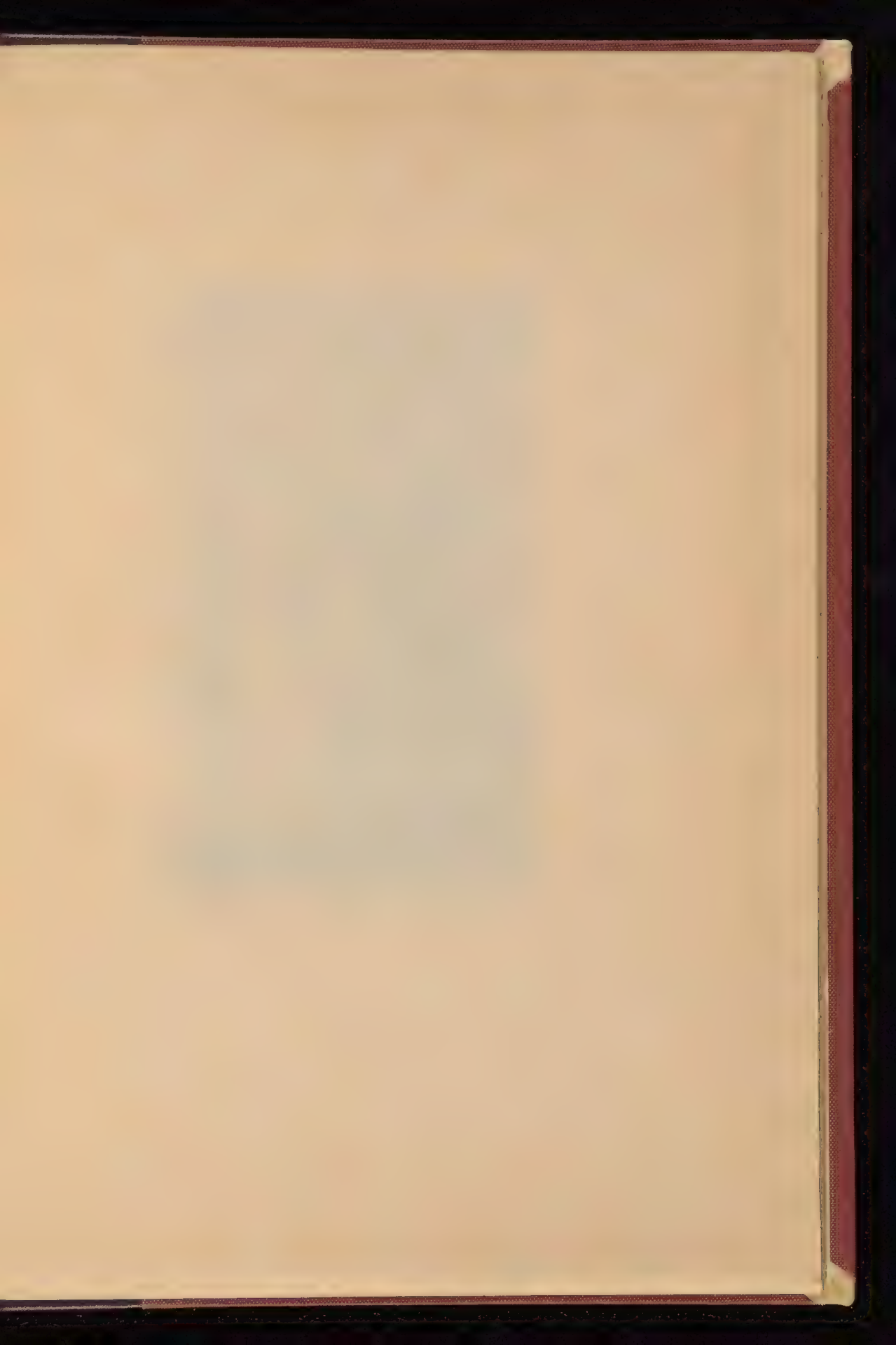








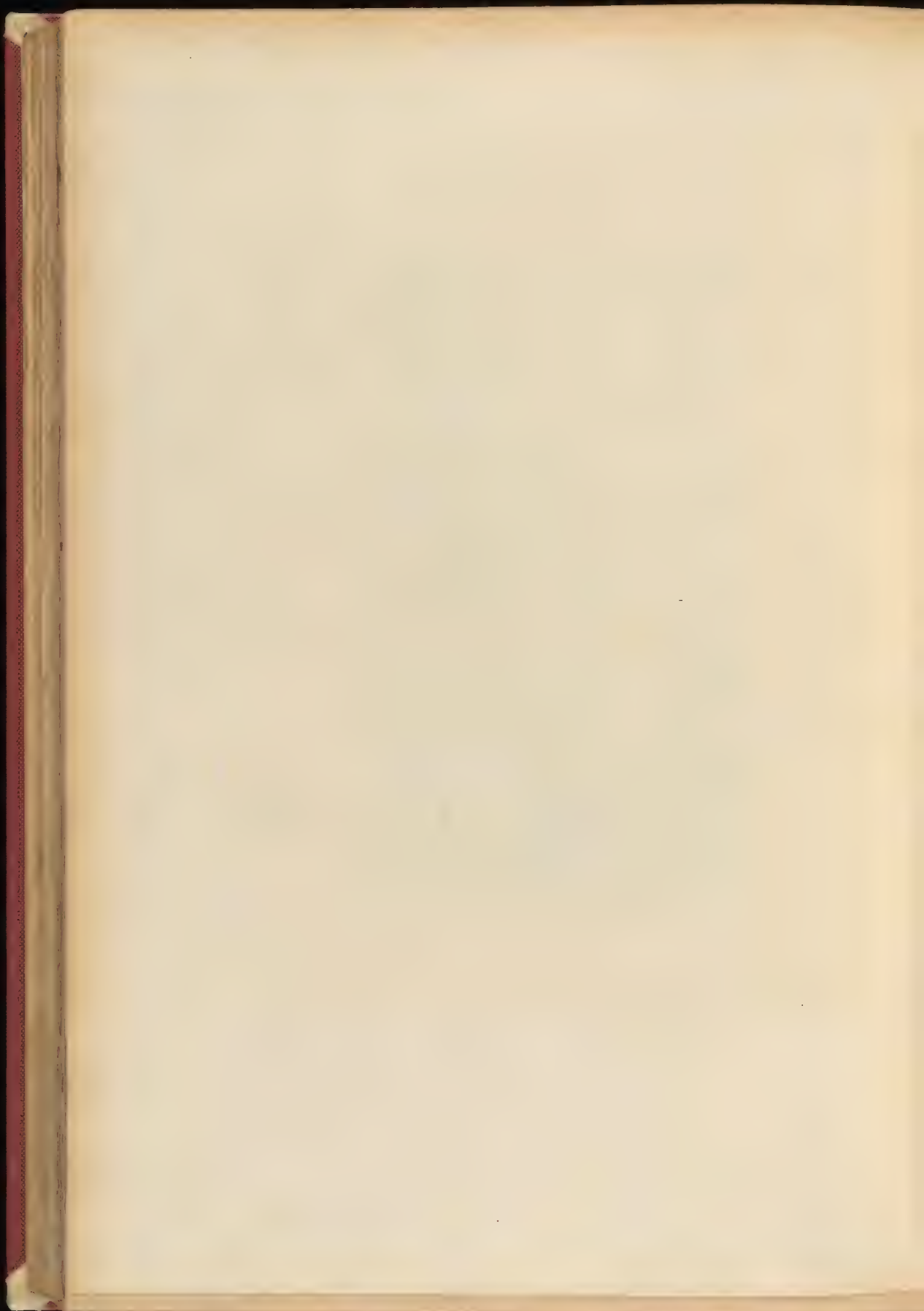












medy of Dumas fils, has given the public an exact idea of these relations almost always platonic. Except in amateur painter's ateliers, where they are spoiled, perverted and deformed into really idle girls, everything passes ordinarily most honestly. Therefore nothing is less astonishing than to learn, one fine morning, that Venus, Diana or some other nymph so many times represented have really been married to a certain mortal in love with their charms, above all because she has been sought for and approved by modern masters.



" Others, the prettiest, allow themselves to be maintained according to the estimation in which their beauty is held.

" Do not on that account think the worse of the profession of model, it has certainly its prestige for many respectable women burn to have, like the goddess before Paris, a judgment, a definite consecration of their beauty by the artist. The *femme d'élite*, it is to be remarked have always loved, in spite of the preachers, to be dressed as décolleté as possible.

" One of these said lately, happy in her great beauty : " If I was really sure that they would not recognise me too clearly I would willingly pose for a sort of Venus, it would be so amusing to figure so at the next Salon. "

" Ah well! Mesdames, you are more exquisitely beautiful than other

women, but what is a still greater victory, is that you are — so they say — the only ones with whom they can talk when they have nothing more to tell you."

I find in this, engraved by the sharp stroke of this painter of so many pages where the delicacy and purity of form is increased by the harmonious play of colors, a certain tone, a hard and fine line that shows a writer nourished with the marrow of the strong. I see also a certain grace, a touch of melancholy that proves that this voluntary cenobite, shut up in his retreat, has not given up all sentiment of mansuetude and emotion. He has known



many of these pretty chattering birds that are called models. He has confessed some of them, and consoled others, he knows that a heart beats in these bosoms bared by the exigencies of their profession, what griefs are born, what passions are strangled and how often are the worst treasons redeemed by kind sentiments. He sometimes has Don Juan scepticism but like Don Juan he gives his obolus to the poor "for love of humanity"

This disenchanted man, has returns towards goodness; this grumbler still believes in certain things that he ostentatiously denies. To see some of his compositions is sufficient to convince us.

The remembrance of one of them comes back to me *à propos*. The subject is simple: on a fifth story landing a door, to the right of the door, a bellcord with a deer's foot for a handle, a flower in the cord, and on the panel of the pitilessly closed door, a name: Marie! Without being an Edgar Poe or the Zadig of Voltaire, I can reconstruct the episode and that thanks to the painter who allows all that has passed to be conjectured:

"She has come, we may suppose that she is very young and be sure that she is delightful. She has climbed, not without losing her breath, the staircase to this garret. It ought to be a Sunday; surely it is the season of

roses. She was full of projects and desires ; she had hoped with *him* to go to country, penetrate the shady alleys, perhaps to gather nuts, and stain her lips with blackberries found in the thickets. So what a deception to find herself before this door mute to her appeals. She underlines her name with her regret and goes away after having attached a rose to the deer's foot. But a tear has fallen, a leaf of the rose lies on the ground.

" The greatest fault in those we love, a clever woman has said, is to be near us out of season and not to be there when it is for her interest and our pleasure that we should be. "

At the angle of one of the towers of Notre-Dame, on the narrow gallery whose carved balcony is fifty yards above ground, half hid behind the wings of a diabolical stone image, two young lovers are crouched, the statue leaning its elbow on this balustrade regards, pushing out its tongue in a cynical manner, the bird's eye view of Paris that extends on every side, the ironical smile of the sculptured demon expresses a sort of challenge to all the city's turbulencies. It seems to say : " Overturn as much as you can ancient customs and manners of life, never can you prevent the spring time to renew each

year the same tender-  
nesses that I by my  
interest protect. "

This charming  
subject is entitled  
" Où diable l'amour  
va-t-il se nicher ? "

It would be per-  
missible for me to  
multiply the quota-  
tions, to recal exam-



ples, to place in the light the *idea* that the painter is always seeking and that he defines with such a charming brush. But what is the use ? I have forewarned that in this study I would occupy myself at least as much with the





man as the artist, for the artist has his value, is really *quelqu'un* outside of his art that he know *jusques en ses verrues*. He holds a large place among the writers and scholars of his time. He is an erudite, like the benedictines of other times, and like them he quietly carries out his valiant work. That which explains the perseverance of M. de Beaumont, is that he has a passion, one of those manias that fill the life of an intelligent being, that takes the place of family and affections. He is a collector and a bibliomane. He monopolizes swords, and he drains all books that have any bearing on



his favorites. Ah! the wonderful library, the marvellous reunion of the finest rapiers. M. Spitzer, the well known and famous collector, has said, M. de Beaumont has something like five hundred thousand francs worth of swords worthy of a place in the finest museum.

I have seen them, I have handled them these shining daggers, these terribly bladed swords with which one might write a chivalrous romance like a *Chanson de gestes*. Amongst these rapiers and daggers exquisitely wrought, of Italian, French or German workmanship, marked by noted stamps, with chased mountings, embossed with gold or enhanced with enamels figures in the first line : A tournament sword of

the Emperor Frederic III.'s, dated 1450. It was offered to the Baron Percy, during the campaign of the first Empire, by the citizens of Dresden. Another sword gilded to the very point, shows on the blades, the escutcheons, arms and names of the Baron Kres de Kressenteinn, governor of the city of Nuremburg in the last years of the fifteenth century.

As I do not wish to have the air of editing a catalogue, I will cite to terminate and as the flower of this reunion of eighty irreproachable pieces, an admirable ornamental sword with enameled silver mounting the blade of which is in peacock-blue, for a third of its length it is also decorated by fine golden arabesques. These arabesques frame some latin verses that indicates



that this unrivaled arm has belonged to Gaston de Foix, who was killed at the battle of Ravennes in 1512. Whom Brantôme says : *portoit sur soy* (the day of the battle) a *faveur* of the Duchess de Ferrare — Lucrece Borgia.

This passion that I have revealed explains how this fashionable painter, this poet of sportive songs blossomed out on canvas, the magician who invents a society on the corner of a fan, the charmer who tells in exquisite water-colors all that throbs in his thoughts, has no turret on the street or mansion in the avenue de Villiers. He lives with his dreams, in the midst of his chimeras side by side with his friends : his books, and his brilliant and proud mistresses : the swords that speak to him of glory and heroism, and his *thébaïde* at once assumes the aspect of a palace. He reviews grand actions, tournaments and murderous combats. He hears floating in the air the oriflammes proudly unfurled. A Spanish rodomontade quoted by Brantôme said in reference to a rapier "O sword ! if you could speak ! —

He voluptuously isolates himself in the contemplation of a majestic past of which, Alas ! we have but a pale reflection. M. de Beaumont occupies, near the Parc Monceau, a house of bizarre appearance : it stands a little back from its neighbours with whom it seems to wish to keep up a certain re-



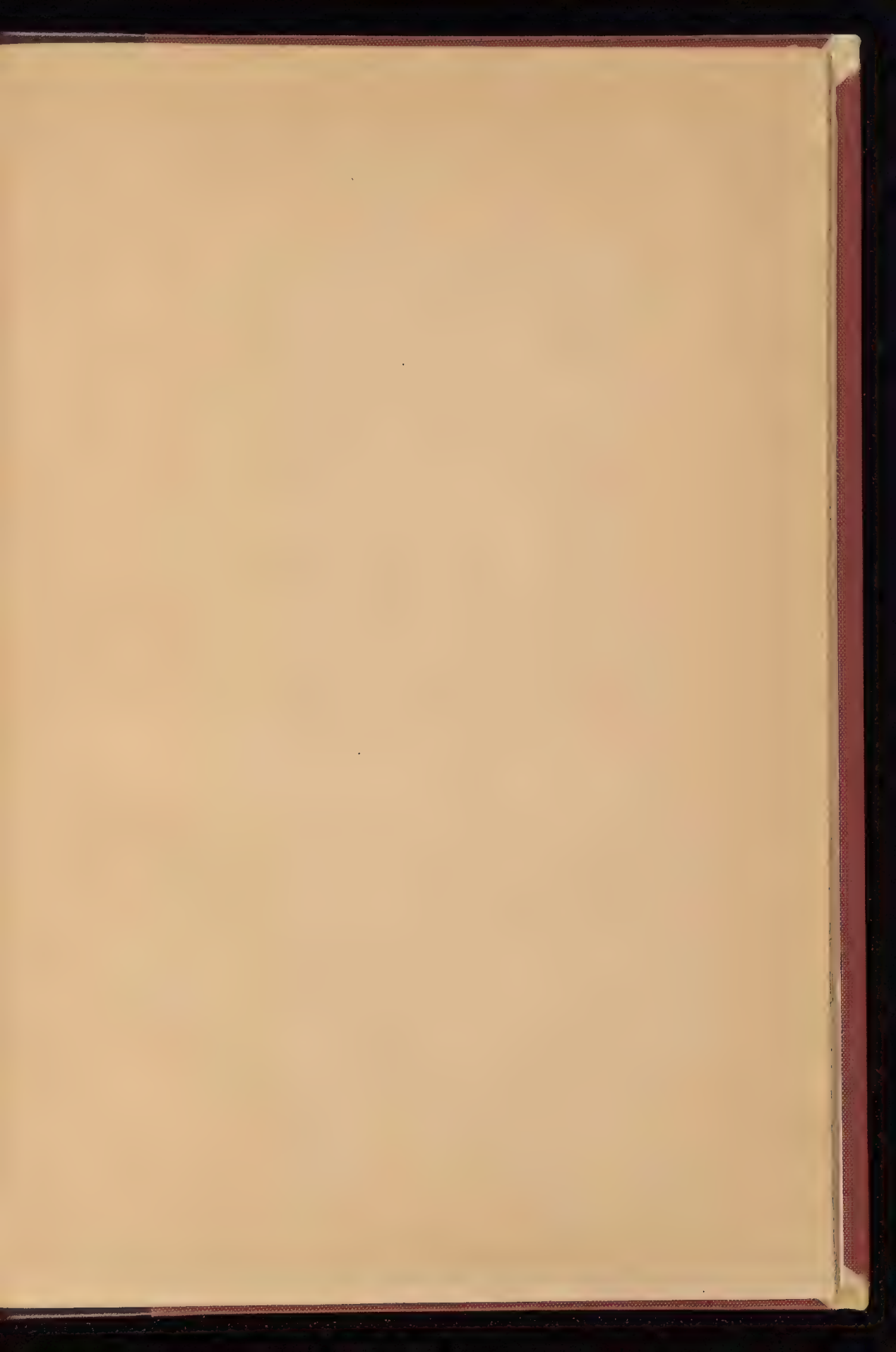
serve. The facade of rigid appearance opens its central door, preceded by a narrow court, on a stone perron of five steps. But, detail particular, the real entrance to this building is on the right side near a finely wrought grating, that without doubt came from some Spanish convent, a side door of very discreet appearance, encircled during the pleasant season with jessamine and honey-suckle, it remains half closed on a long passage, that in springtime is bordered with rare lilacs. This passage, of which Alexandre Dumas, in the *Ami des femmes*, has described the merits and advantages gives at its extremity on the avenue Wagram.

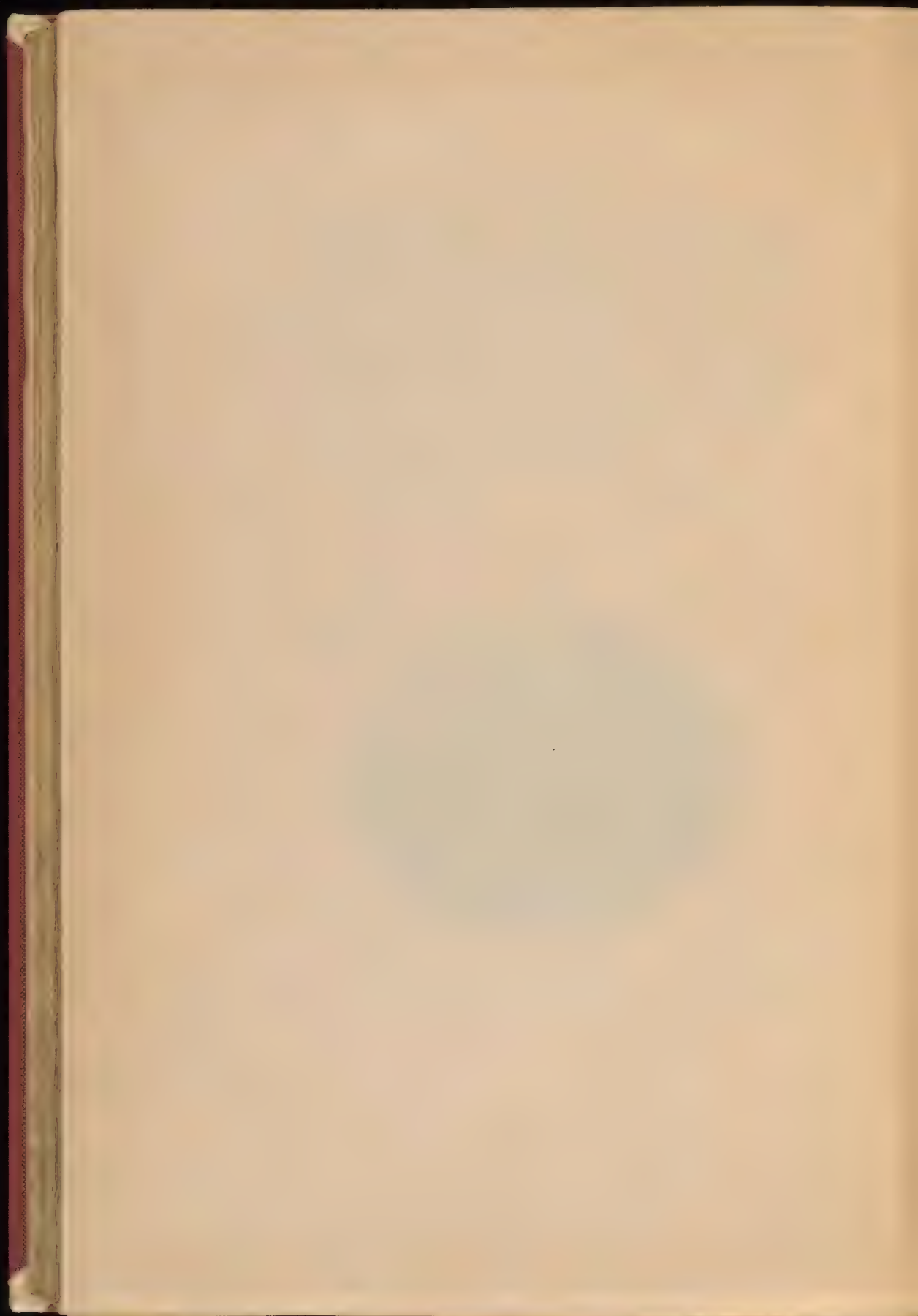
An ex-artillery man, who formerly in Africa was the orderly of general Lamoricière is the cerberus that guards M. de Beaumont's door.

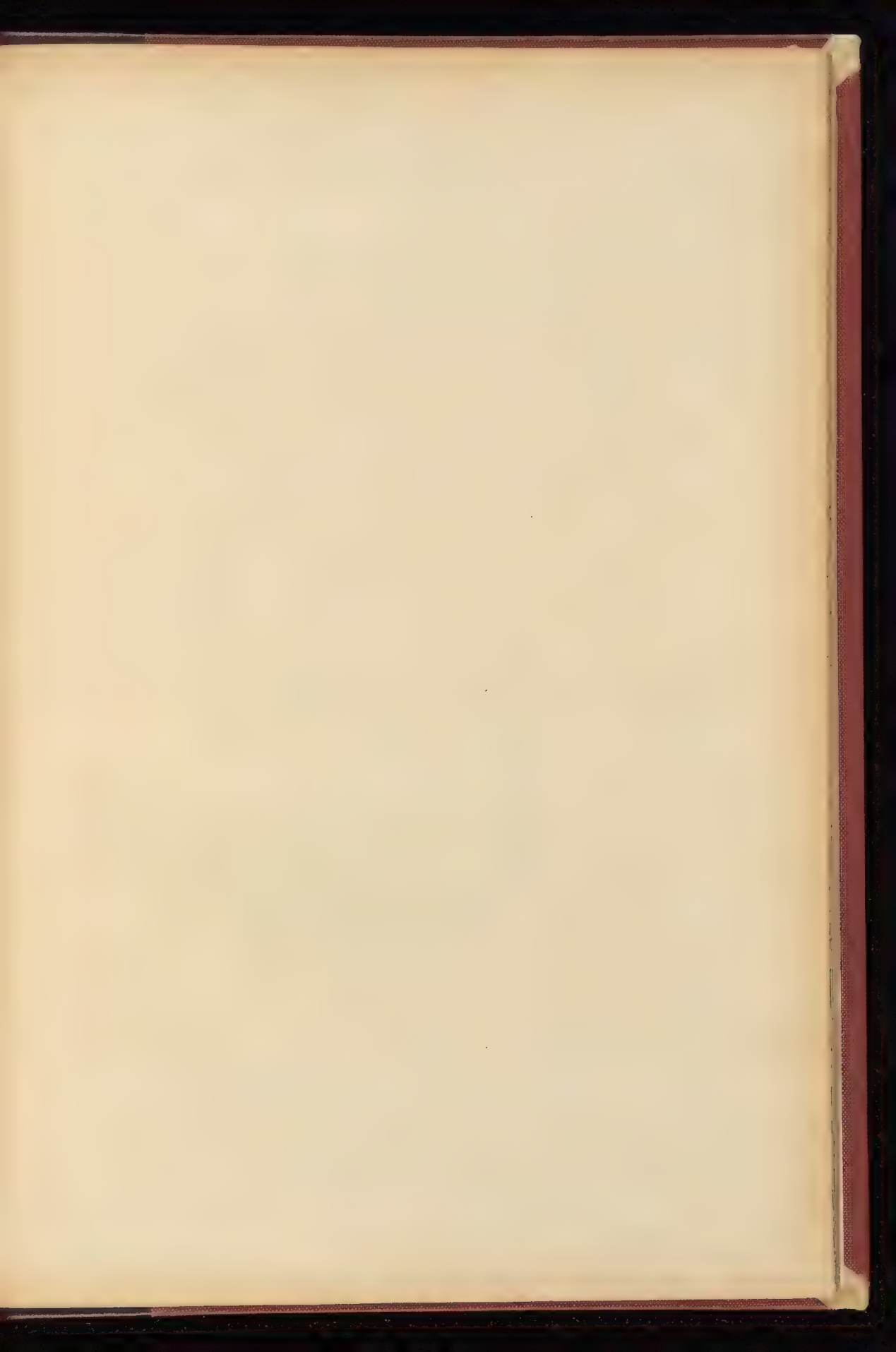
In spite of the rather eccentric quarter, and the inconvenience that for the painter is the result of this remoteness, he clings to his house in which he occupies the second floor. He is at his ease here, he finds himself absolutely comfortable he has that freedom in manner that one has in an old garment which has taken all the turns of one's body. And besides he has been here *provisionally* during the last nineteen years. What a good reason for not changing. M. de Beaumont has also another: "I would have the spleen," he sometimes murmurs, "if I did not have, as a proof of my perfect liberty, that famous little door always ajar day and night." He adds not without a regretful sigh: "By this entrance, which thieves would shun — and they are right — sometimes there arrives for me, all costumed in rose, certain pleasant reminders of the charming bohemian country."

EUGÈNE MONTROSIER







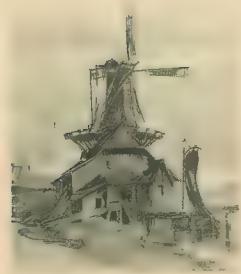


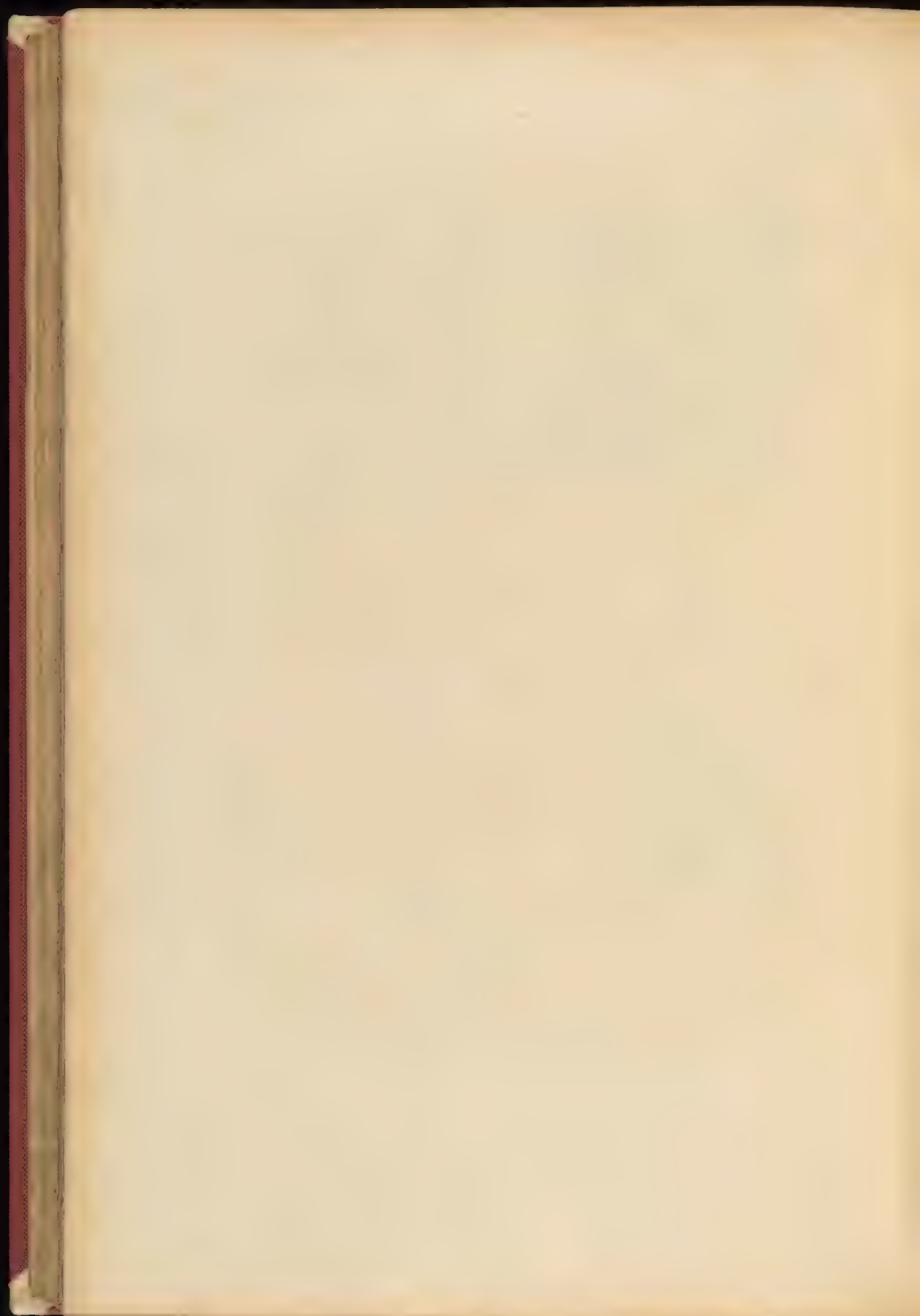


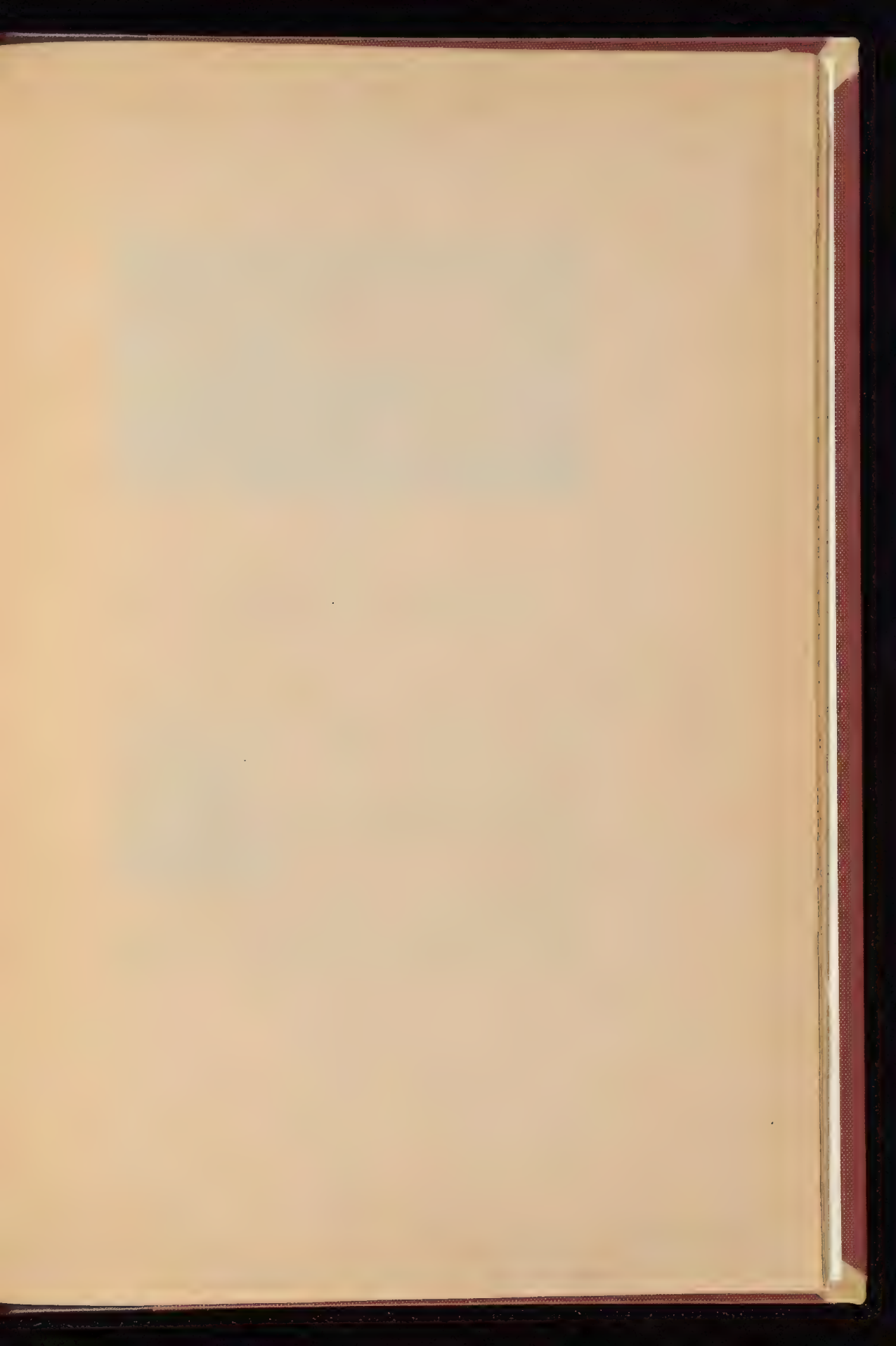


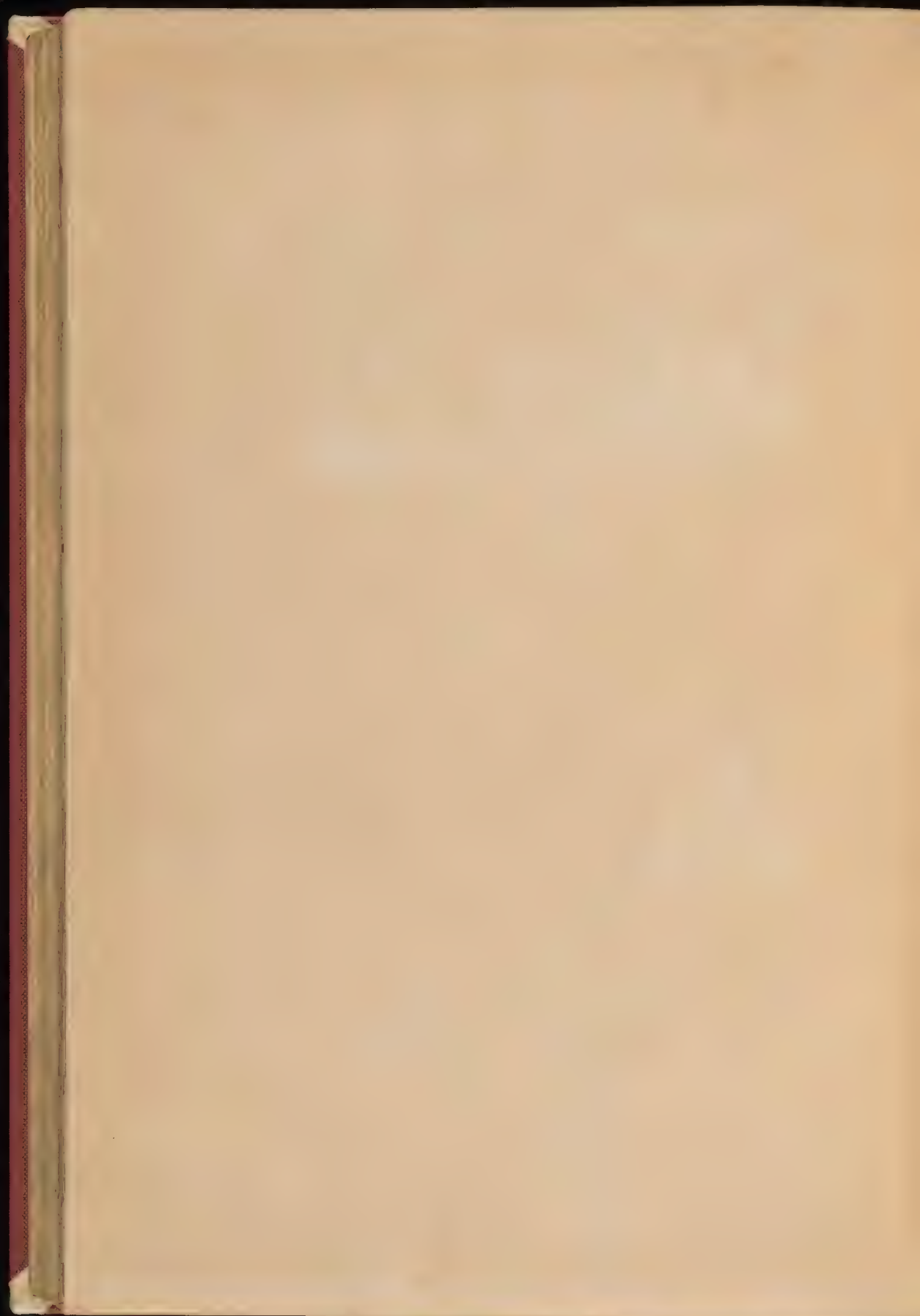








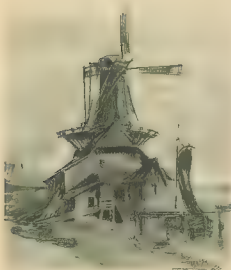








# M<sup>ME</sup> LA BARONNE N. DE ROTHSCHILD



It was in 1867 that M<sup>me</sup> la baronne Nathaniel de Rothschild made her first appearance at the annual Salon, by some views of Genoa that were at once much remarked and highly appreciated. From the first M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild revealed those very high qualities of execution, and happy gifts of sentiment and observation that have placed her in the front rank of *aquarellistes français*.

In 1868 and 1869, M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild abandoning the south, went northward and offered to the public a very interesting and remarkable series of water-colors that carried us into Holland, on the banks of the Meuse, to the environs of Amsterdam, etc., and that translated with rare justness of expression, with a feeling of

intimate knowledge of things, the peculiar and original character of this strange country.

1870 found us carried to Italy, to Venice, Rome and the Istrian shores. M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild only exhibited seven water-colors, these were but a small portion of the fine serie of drawings and water-colors that she brought back from this long journey in Italy, which was entirely devoted to work and study.

M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild, at the Salon of 1872, showed us Brittany and aided us to penetrate into that marvellous little town of Dinan, that is one of the rarest jewels of France. M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild has this grand merit that she has not been affected with the evil that preys upon so many artist : I refer to specialties. She does not coop herself up, nor shut herself in to a narrow territory, thus her pictures are not a continual repetition of the same



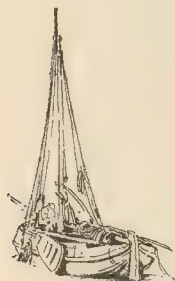
landscape with the same skies. Naturally curious and a seeker after novelty she has made not only a tour of France, but also of Europe.

Everything interests, everything attracts and appeals to her : Italy, Holland,

Brittany, Spain, the Basque provinces, etc., and every where penetrated by the air she breathes, troubled but filled with emotion before nature, she is able to convey with exquisite fidelity the impressions that emanate from all things.

However, it was not only Brittany views that M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild exhibited at the Salon of 1872. A water-color figured in the catalogue under this simple title : "Oignons du Midi". Upon an unbleached napkin, bordered

with blue, were placed three large onions of a lovely violet-rose color, sprouted and tufted full of sap and life, wonderful in color and relief; beside these three big onions humbly and modestly rested a little clove of garlic, white as snow. M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild found the means of slipping into this water-color a dramatic interest; a kitchen knife, with a black wood handle and shining blade was placed on the napkin beside the onions; we felt that their last hour had come, that soon those delicate and luminous rosetints, the tender and fine whites would disappear.



c.a.

These onions of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild obtained at the Salon of 1872 a very great success, but they were also discussed and even attacked. M. Albert Wolff blamed them, whilst recognising that they were executed in a masterly manner. It was the subject that astonished and annoyed him.

— Here, he said, is a *femme du monde* who exposes. You will perhaps imagine that she has sent to the Salon blond and rosy children, poetic landscapes, muses and nymphs, lilies and roses. Not at all; she has sent us onions and garlic.

But M. Albert Wolff was soon reassured. These big onions and little clove of garlic flanked by the cruel knife was only an amusing fancy. M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild recommenced and continued the brilliant and varied serie of studies from nature. She exhibited at the Salon of 1874 a view of the "Portail de l'église de Béost"

and at the Salon of 1875 some views, of "Les rues de Salies-de-Béarn". There, again, was shown the ingenious fertility of her talent, her rare



qualities of exact and penetrating observation that clearness that does not exclude either freedom or largeness of execution, the perfect agreement between the thing rendered and the thing seen, of the expression of the impression with the impression received.

With the Salon of 1876 we return to Italy. M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild exposed two important water-colors : a view "of Scafati, in the environs of Naples" and a "view of l'Abbazia di San Gregorio, at Venice".

Venice! M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild takes us there often during the succeeding years and always with the same happy result always the same success. Besides, in regard to this, the two most important photogravures that are



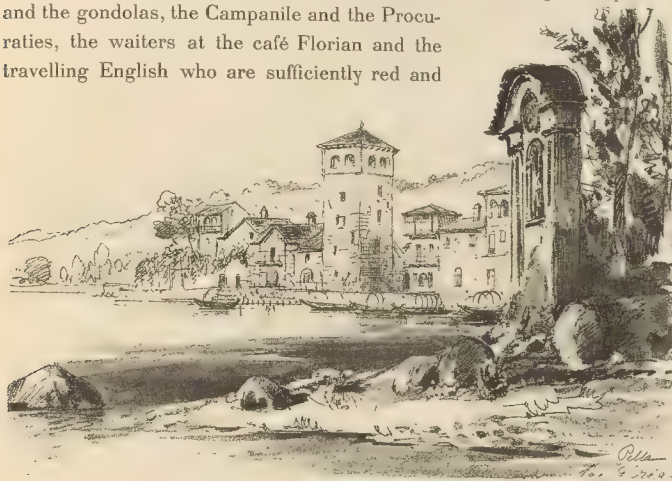
included in this notice renders my task easy and speak more eloquently than all the words in the world. They allow to be appreciated in all its grace and strength the happy talent of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild.

I have at this time before me the original of one of these exact and truthful reproductions, the view of the canal *Ogni Santi*. From this water-color escapes an exquisite impression of grace and freshness. Bathed in an equal and soft light, bright without crudeness or tumult, these palaces, the lovely rose and white bridge, the delicate and supple foliage, the dome and bell-towers of the church of Gesuatis, the sun illumined roofs that are reflected so clearly and strongly in these delicious waters, that offer so solid and resisting a support to the heavy black boats, and are, at the same



time, so transparent and liquid that the brightness of the sky seem to penetrate them.

A certain Venice was the fashion some thirty years ago, and fashion, notwithstanding all they may say, has a very tenacious hold especially when it is absurd which often happens. Upon this sparkling and radiant Venice, in an absolutely extravagant sky, a sun not less extravagant which only blazes in the vicinity of the place Saint-Marc. Under this furious sun every thing becomes scarlet, persons and things, the palaces and the gondolas, the Campanile and the Procuraties, the waiters at the café Florian and the travelling English who are sufficiently red and



rosy tinted of themselves. In this riot of carmine, tourists entering Venice immediately lose, as if touched by a magicians wand, their natural color and become a most violent red. These dazzling and blinding views of Venice should only be looked at through blue glasses. And the ordinary painters, of the ancient capital of this most serene republic, have ended by imposing on the public this blazing, brilliantly red and dazzling Venice.

Fromentin, the famous painter and great writer visited Venice a few years before his death. He brought back two admirable views of the Grand Canal, in which the sun performed, conscientiously but not excessively, his task as a sun, and did not pour out upon Venice disordered torrents of fantastic light.

An important art-dealer, very expert in his business, came to see the two pictures in Fromentin's studio. He looked at them, admired them, but did not buy them.

"They are very fine, he said, only they are not salable.

"Why is that?" asked Fromentin.

"It is not Venice...

"Not Venice! But it is the Venice that I saw! Go to the Louvre. Look at the Guardi's and the Canaletti's, they knew Venice, and it is their Venice that I found there.

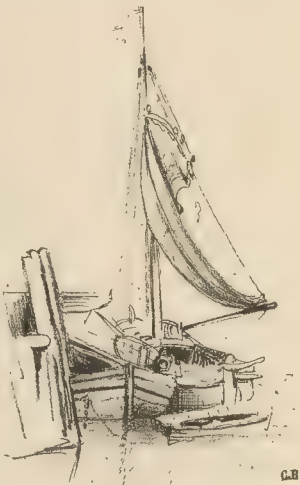
"Without doubt... Without doubt. But what I would say is that it is not the Venice that the public has been accustomed to in these last years. We are unfortunately obliged to take into account the tastes formed." And the two pictures of Venice were in Fromentin's atelier at the time of his death.

These fireworkish views of Venice were made from chic in the studios.



Thank heaven, this state of thing is passing away. Landscapists have discovered a simple thing, which is, to paint in the open air, after nature, and M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild has contributed greatly, in these last years, to give us the real Venice. This wonderful city has allured her several times, there she has spent long months that to her seemed short, entirely consecrated to this art which is her life and passion.

M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild has brought back from Venice a large number of





water-color studies taken with a firm and delicate touch; she has the gift to rapidly seize without effort or trouble, that general harmony that nature gives all things. All is useful to her, besides. She does not seek motives with startling effects, to catch the eye. Under her brush the simplest and most tranquil subjects take color, warmth and movement. There are pictures that place you outside of the frames, and there are others that call



to you, draw you to them in which you seem to enter, and which hold you. Well, into the water-colors of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild we can penetrate, move about, breath, and live at our ease; they do no give you nor leave with

you the impression of something hard and cold, without air or depth. The talent of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild is a clear and precise talent; she possesses that quality that Vauvenargues

has so justly styled the varnish of Masters : *clearness*. Knowing how to see and knowing how to execute, she keeps in a most happy manner between the two extremes : too much finish and not enough finish. She seeks to catch, as it were, nature in the act, without being arranged or complicated, without trickery or dupery, with a rare precision of glance and surety of touch. She belongs neither to the school *lêché* not to the *lâché* school.



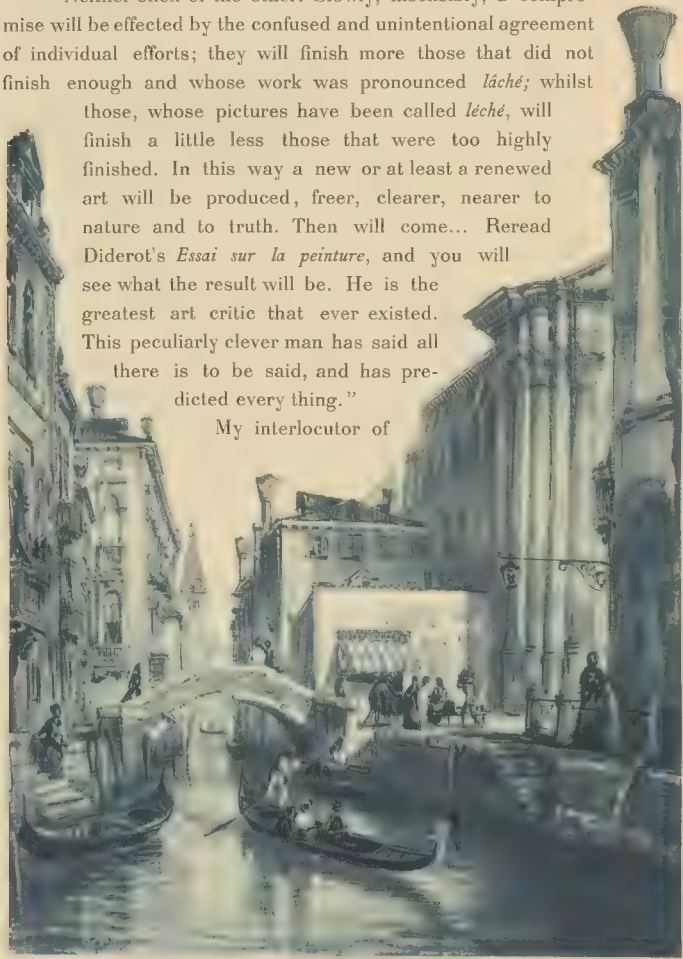
This phrase does not belong to me. One of the most distinguished and intelligent artist of the time said to me at the Salon ten years ago :

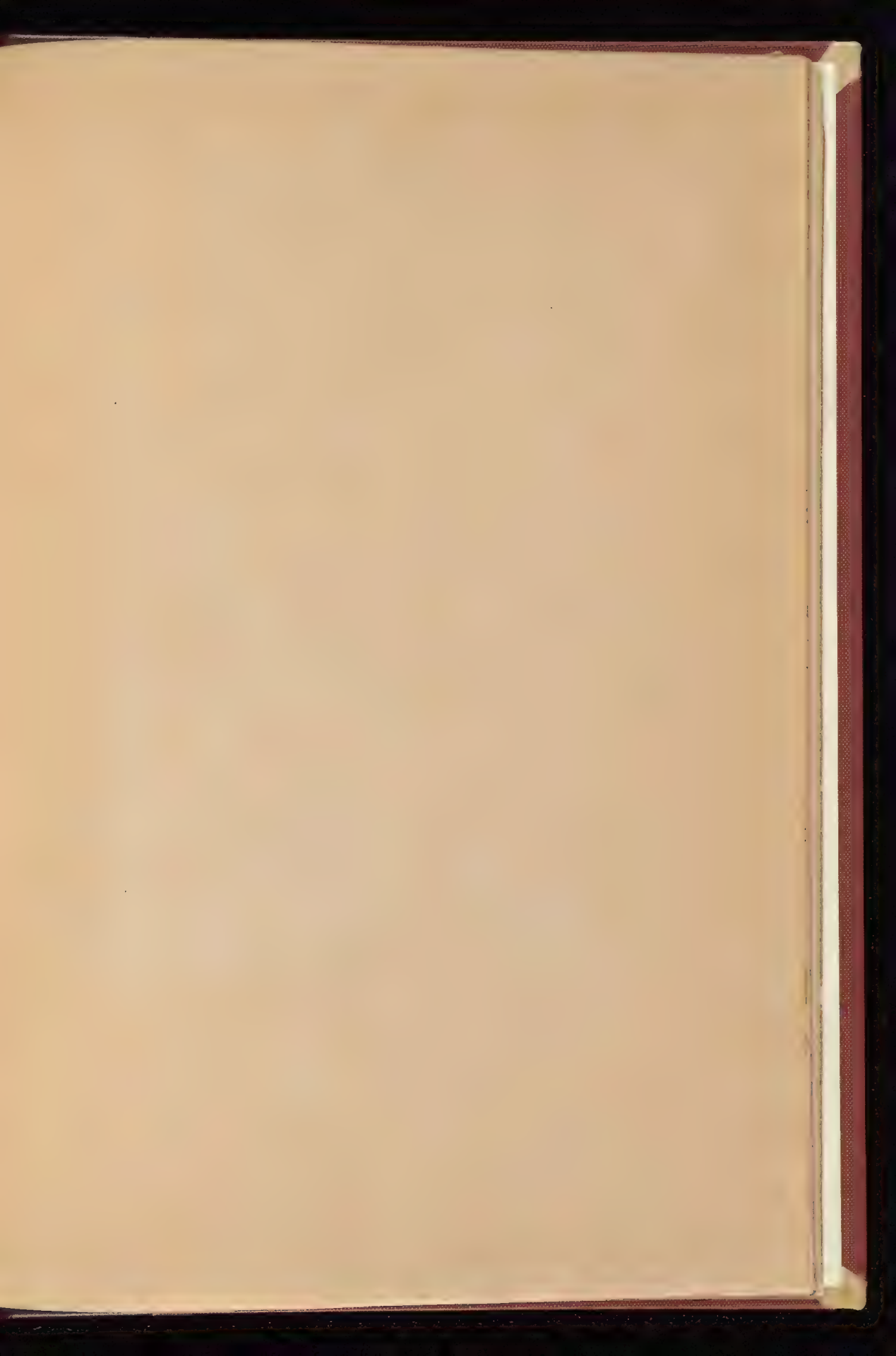
"The quarrel is between two school : the *lêché* school and the school *lâché*.

"And in the end, I asked him, which will carry the day? The *lêché* or the *lâché*?"

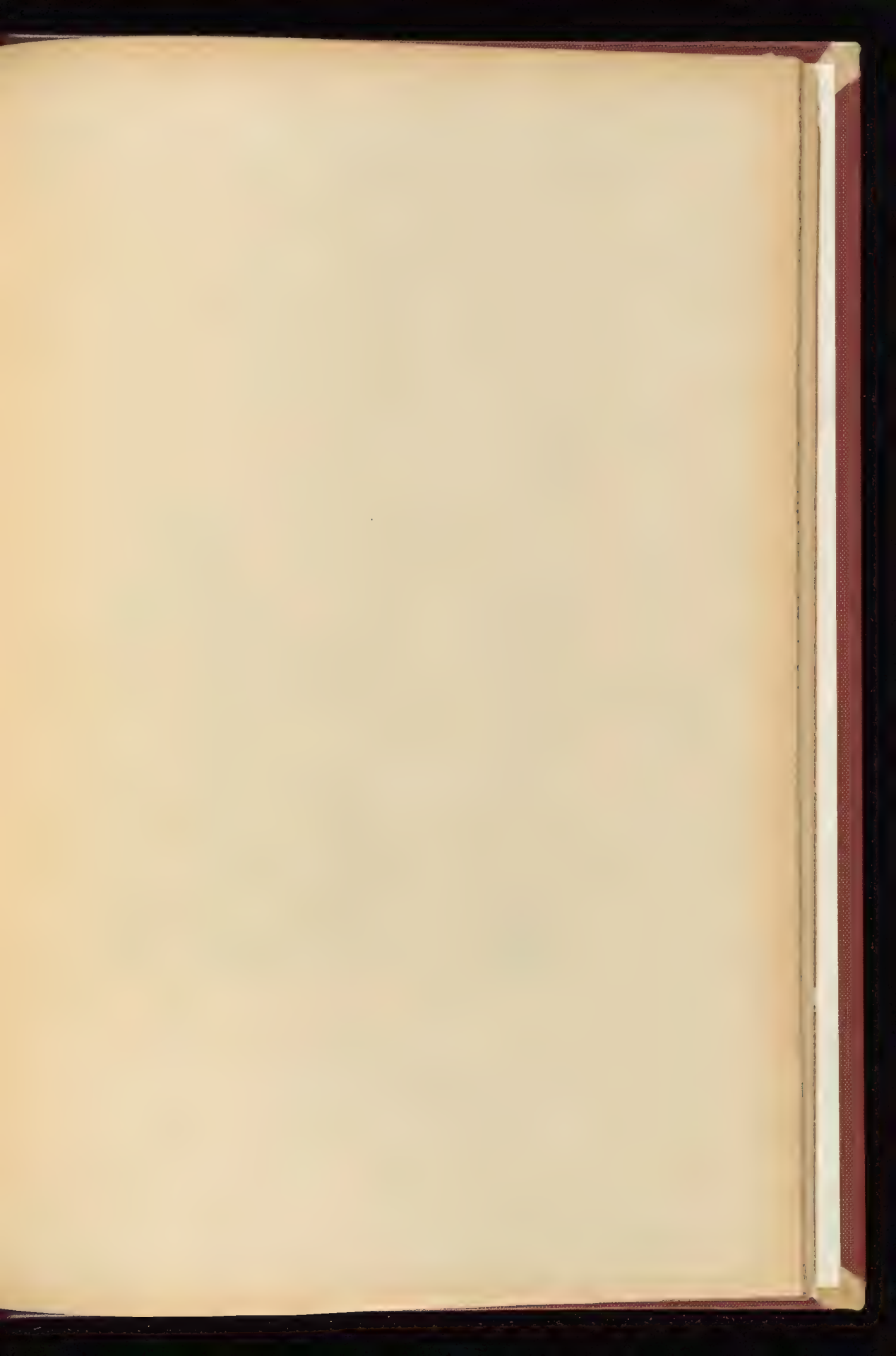
"Neither onen or the other. Slowly, insensibly, a compromise will be effected by the confused and unintentional agreement of individual efforts; they will finish more those that did not finish enough and whose work was pronounced *lâché*; whilst those, whose pictures have been called *lêché*, will finish a little less those that were too highly finished. In this way a new or at least a renewed art will be produced, freer, clearer, nearer to nature and to truth. Then will come... Reread Diderot's *Essai sur la peinture*, and you will see what the result will be. He is the greatest art critic that ever existed. This peculiarly clever man has said all there is to be said, and has predicted every thing."

My interlocutor of





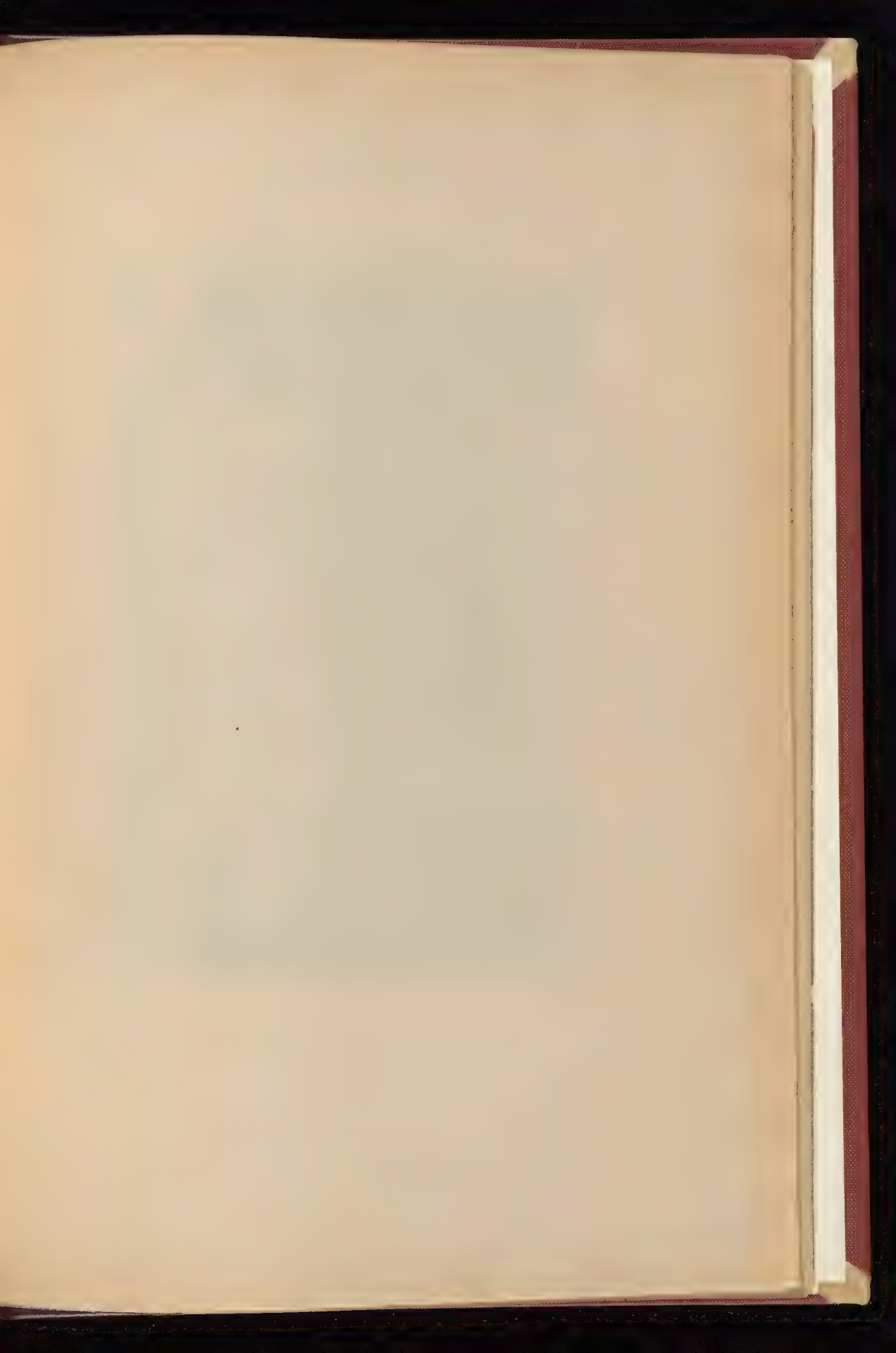








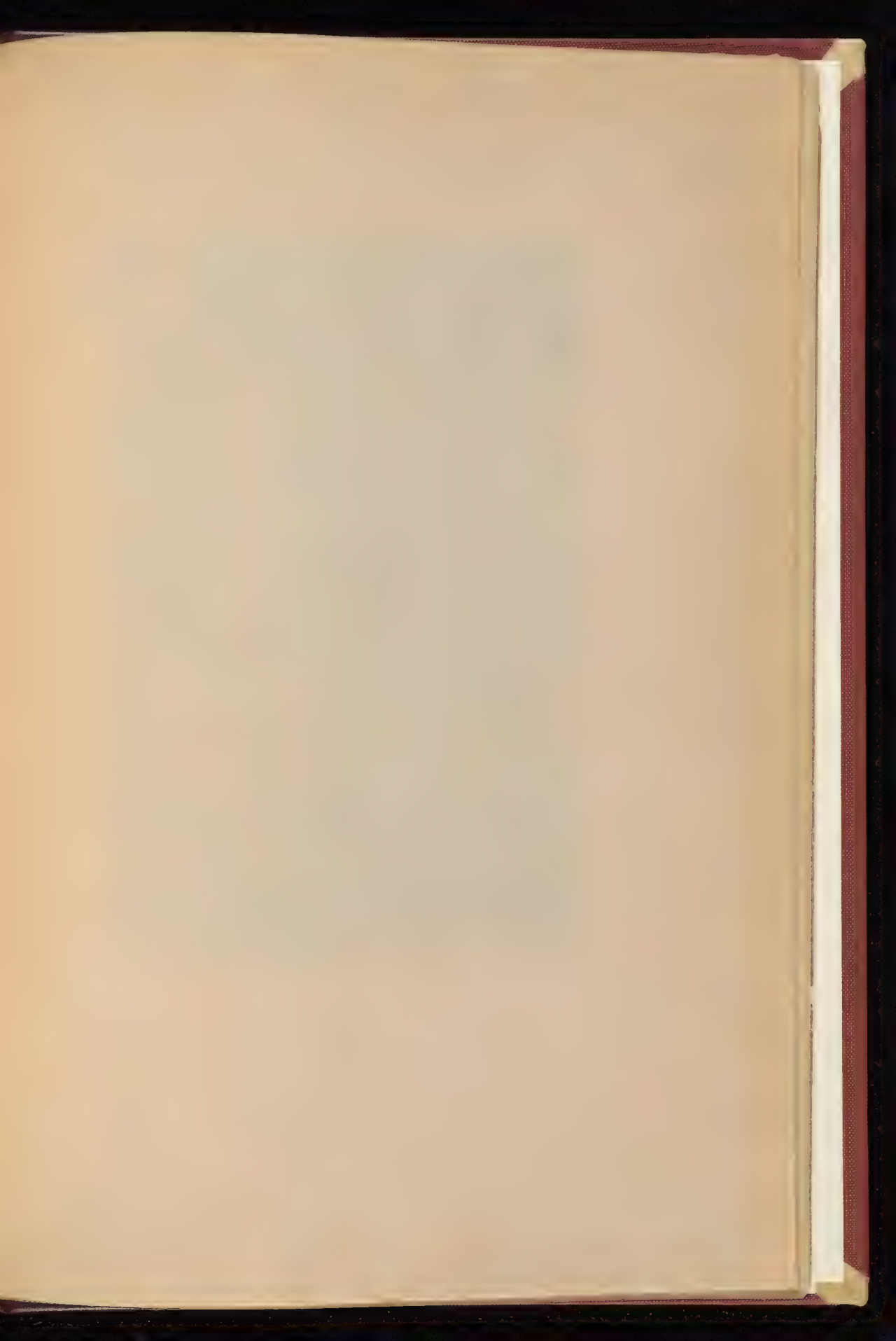




















ten years age was right in the fullest sense. That which is coming to pass to day is just what Diderot conseiled and announced about the middle of the last century. An admirable thing that first chapter of the *Essai sur la peinture* entitled : *Mes pensées bizarres sur le dessin*. Diderot commenced by establishing this principle :

" Nature creates nothing incorrectly. All forms beautiful or ugly, have their causes, and of all existing beings there is not one who is not as he should be. "

This granted, Diderot asks if it really was reasonable to oblige the pupils of the Academie to draw during seven years in the atelier from the model. It is there, he says, that during these seven laborious and cruel years that mannerism in drawing is contracted. All these academical positions, are constrained, prepared, arranged, all these actions coldly imitated by a



poor devil who is paid to come three times a week undress himself and turn himself into a lay-figure by the professor orders, what have they in common with the positions and mouvements of nature?... I knew a young man full of talent who, before making the least mark would throw himself on his knees saying : " God my, deliver me from the model. " It is not in the school that they learn the general concurrence of movements, concurrence that is

felt, that can be seen and that extends and undulates from the head to the feet. A hundred times I have been tempted to say to the young men that



I meet on their way to the drawing school, then in the Louvre, with their portfolio under their arm : " My friend, how long have you been drawing there? Two years. Well then, that is more than enough. — Leave at once that shop of mannerisms. Go to the Chartreux and you will see there the true attitude of piety and contrition. To day

is the eve of a grand church festival; go to the parish church and prow around the confessionnals and there you will see the real attitude of medi-



tation and repentance. To morrow go to the tavern, and you will see the real action of an angry man. Search alaces of public amusement, be observant in the streek, in the gardens and parks, in houses and you will obtain exact ideas of the real movement in life's actions. "

Diderot recounts in this same *Essai sur la peinture*, that a young man was consulted by his family as to the manner in which his father's portrait should be taken; the father was an iron worker.

" Have him in his working clothes, his smith's cap and apron; let me see him at his bench with his work in hand that he is proving or sharpening, and above all do not forget to put his spectacles on his nose. "



This project was not followed; they sent the young man a fine portrait of his father standing, wearing a handsome wig, a beautiful coat, fine stockings, holding a handsome snuff box in his hand; the young fellow who had a taste



for truth in his character, said to his family: "What you have had done is valueless; I asked for my every day father and you have only sent me my father in his Sunday clothes."

M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild does not decorate nature neither with a handsome wig nor a beautiful coat; she does not give us Sunday landscapes but every day landscapes. I know not how to felicitate her too highly. But also to arrive at this naturalness, this simplicity what

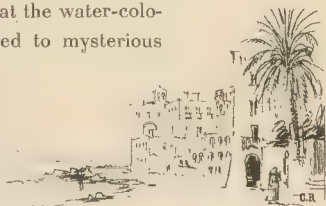
labor! She follows Diderot's conseil; she travels about and studies life, she observes in the streets, in the parks, in houses, she does not make a lay figure of nature... and formerly they did treat nature as a lay figure, and arranged a landscape as one might arrange a model; if they found her too simple, too naked, they added a rock here, a cascade there, and they



grouped some broken pieces of columns and capitals to furnish the foreground; upon these ruins, they would seat a herdsman making love to a young shepherdess; then they would decorate the sky with flocks of birds flying with outspread wings, in a word it was scenic painting not landscape. It is only during the last few years that the public has been able to appreciate all the flexibility and richness of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild's talent. The career of water-colorists was very dubious until the year of

grace 1879 that saw their deliverance and entrance into the promised land.

The organizers of the Salon treat the water-colorists cruelly; their works are banished to mysterious and unfindable rooms, in deserted and chilly regions where it is almost dangerous to adventure. It requires great audacity and much cunning to discover at the Salon the water-color exhibition. Often one is obliged to renounce the enterprise after having made several useless departures midst miles of family portraits and battle pictures.



Then the water-colorists revolted; they have proclaimed their independance and the opening of their private exhibition is each year an event.

Rue Laffitte, in 1879, M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild exhibited five water-colors: " Dans les lagunes, à Venise ", " Maison de paysan près Naples ", " Puits près de Torre Annunziata ", " Maison dite de Castor et Pollux, à Pompéi ".

I have preserved a very clear remembrance of this last water-color a thrilling impression of ruin and solitude under an implacable sunlight.

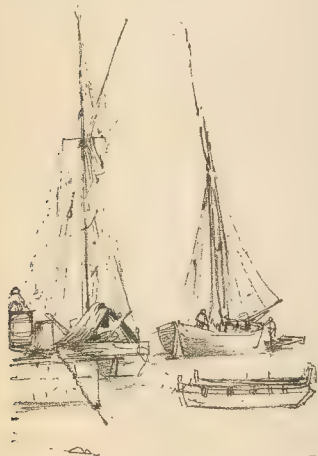
It is in truth the dead city so admirably described by Taine in his *Voyage en Italie* :

" A grey and reddish city, half ruined and deserted, a mass of stones upon a hill of rocks, with rows of thick walls and bluish flagstones, all this whiteness in an air of dazzling whiteness; surrounded by the sea, mountains an infinite perspective. "





In 1880, M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild exhibition was shared between Italy and the Spanish Basque provinces; she sent six water-colors: "Une Maison à Pasages", "Une Vue de Pompéi", "La Carniceria", "Renteria", "Le Grand Canal à Venise", and "Sur la Corniche, près Nervi".



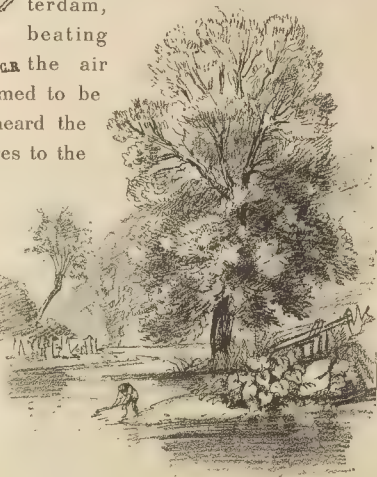
In 1881, "Murano", "La Tour des Brigands au Cannet", and four others called "Venise" simply, and that might be reckoned among the most remarkable of M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild's works.

Finally in 1883, rue de Sèze, we had two more water-colors of Venice, and a serie of Holland views, lifelike and most original. What a lovely thing was that "Moulin des Steurs" at Amsterdam, beating

on the air

with its big vanes: it seemed to be turning, one imagined they heard the grinding while its shadow plunges to the bottom of the tranquil waters on which water-lilies are floating.

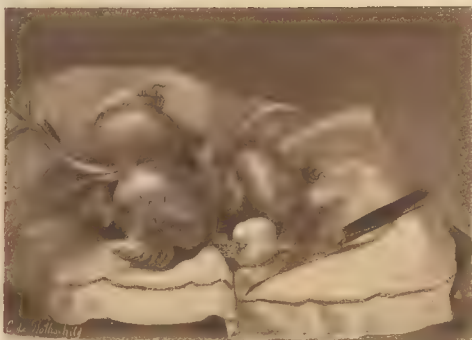
This is what M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild has shown us. But if the public but knew all the studies that she has not exhibited. Those who think that the author of all these charming works is an *amateur* working for her amusement, for her own distraction, to occupy idle hours in her life, are very much deceived. It is evident that it is not absolutely necessary for M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild to work that she may live, though she would not know how to live without

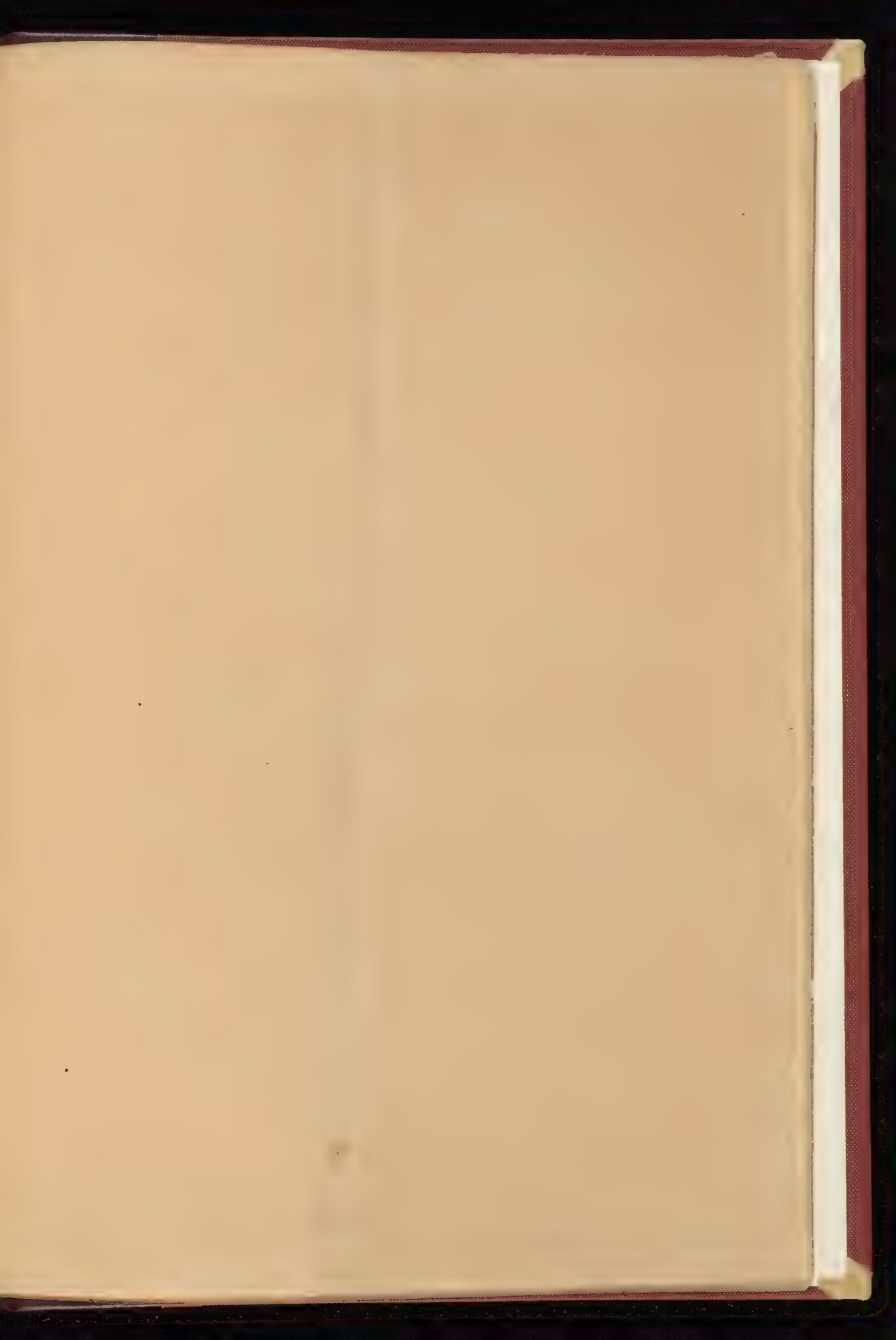


working, without working steadily, and always. She loves work for itself, for the pleasure that it gives, for the consolation which it brings.

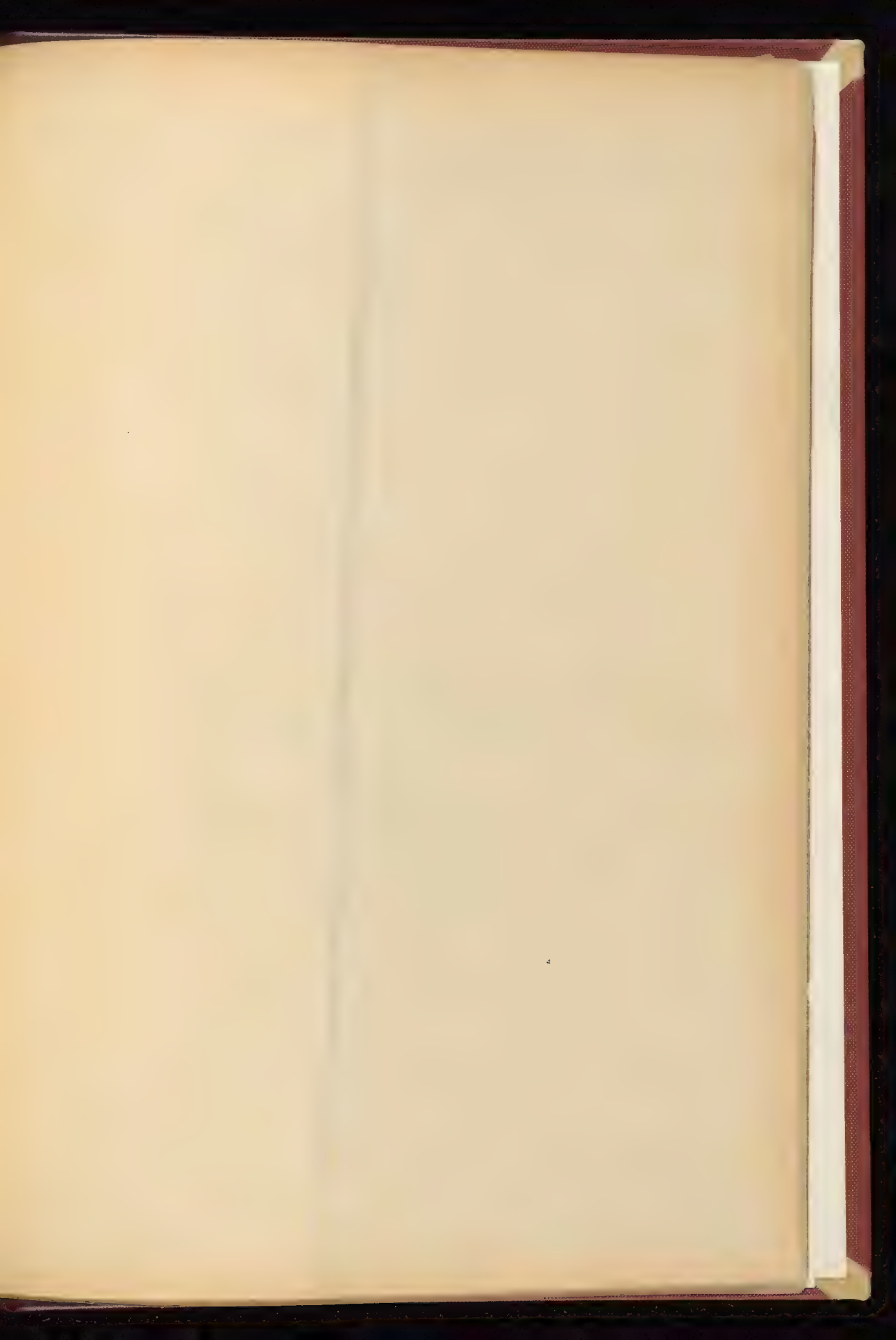
The greater and best part of her life is spent in the magnificent atelier of the faubourg Saint-Honoré, peopled with marvellous *chefs-d'œuvre* of Guardi, Bonnington, Decamps, Fortuny and others. If by hazard one of the carved oaken presses that furnish the studio should be opened, what a wealth of studies and drawing would be exposed an immense quantity that shows that M<sup>me</sup> de Rothschild has a real passion for work, that never tires and that a most legitimate success has largely recompensed.

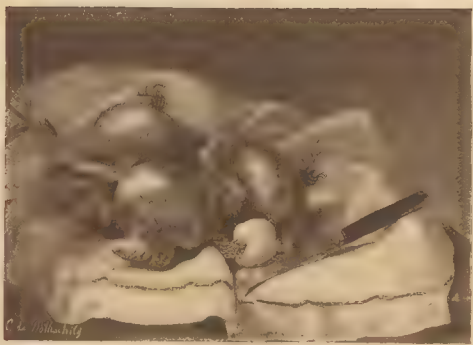
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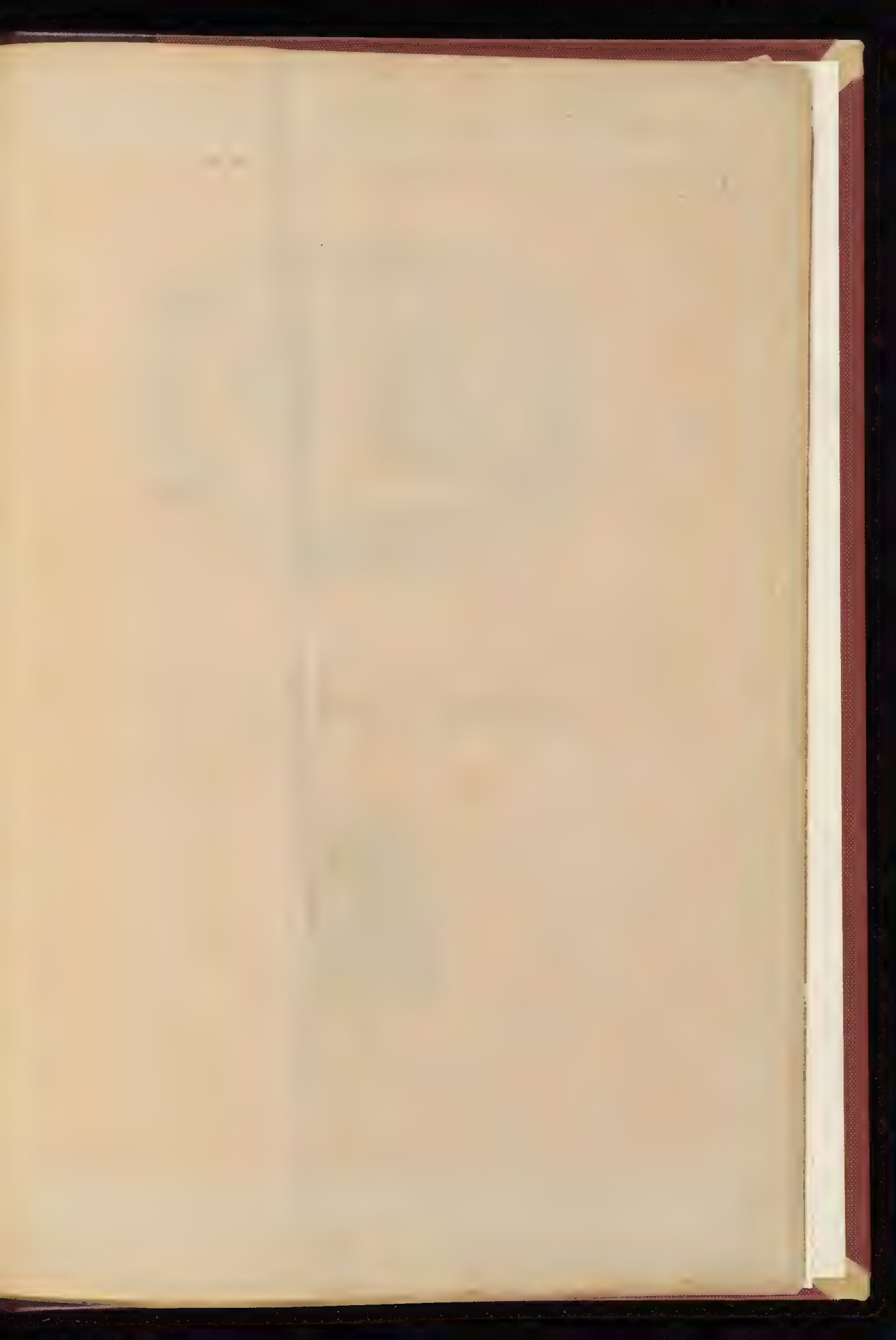




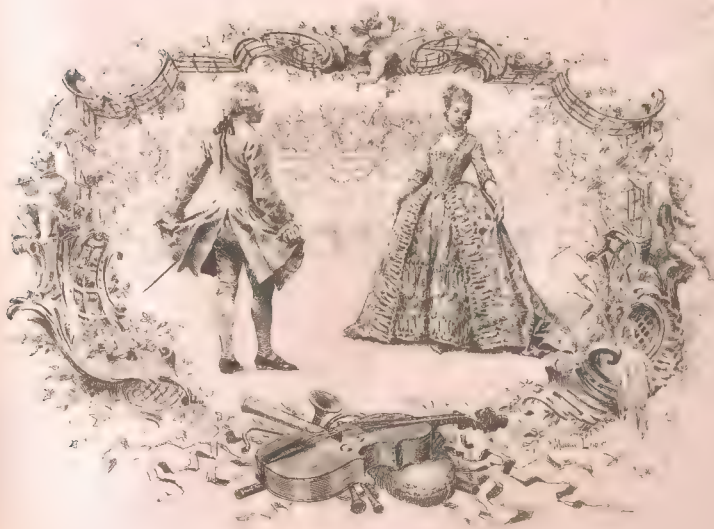








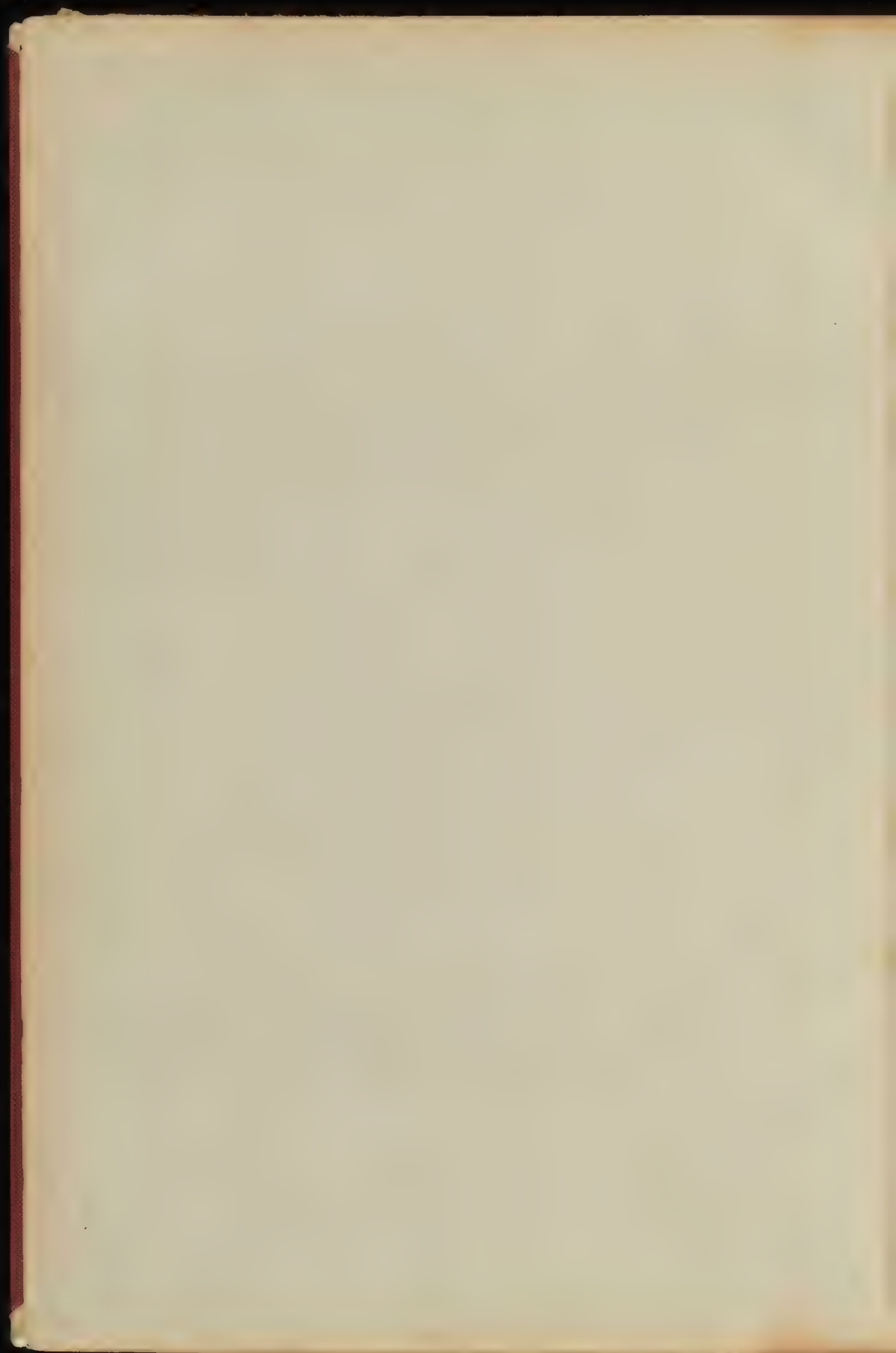


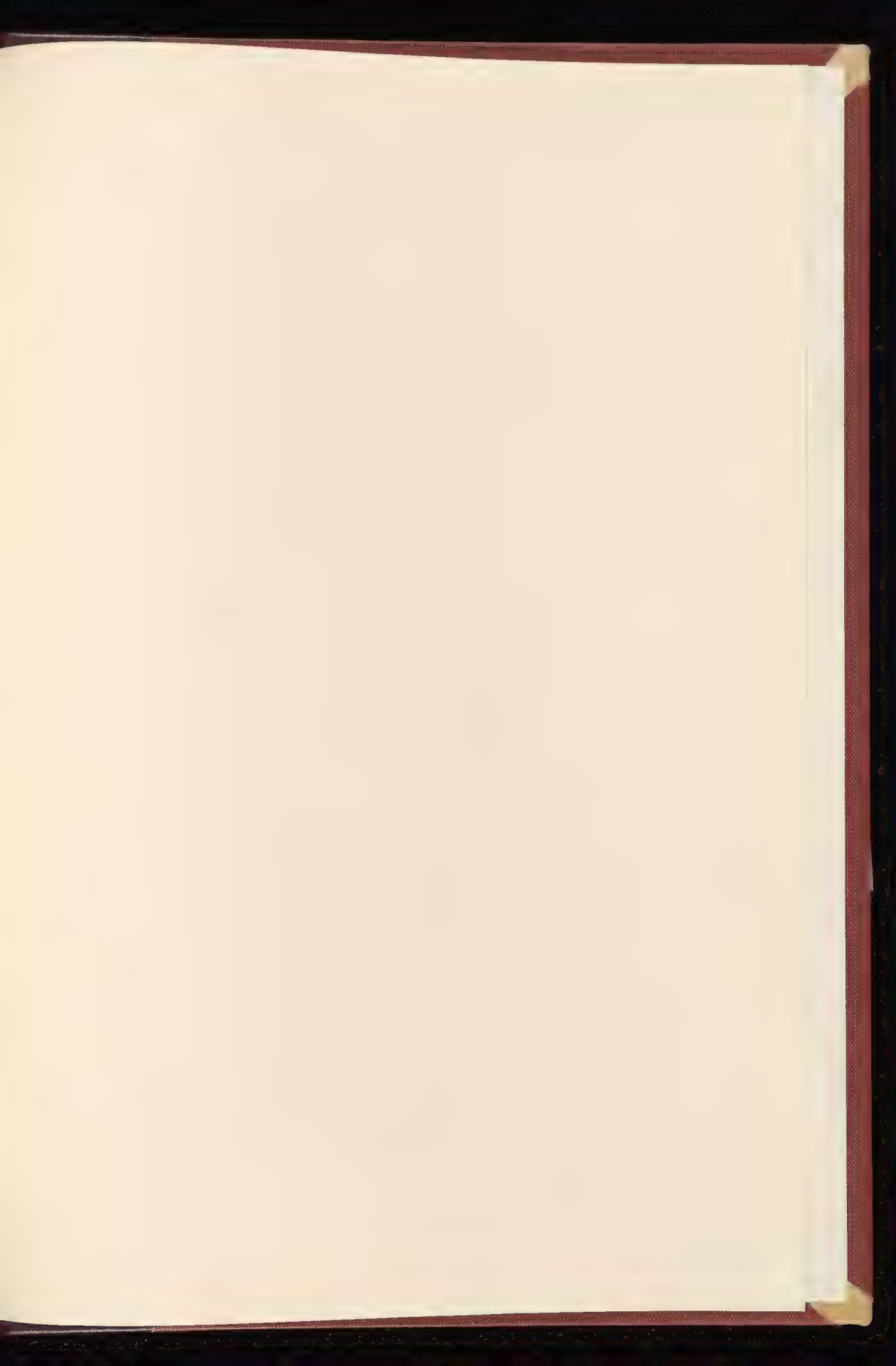


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